

ANCIENT INDIA

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BY

M. ELPHINSTONE

E. B. COWELL

W. W. HUNTER

J. TALBOYS WHEELER

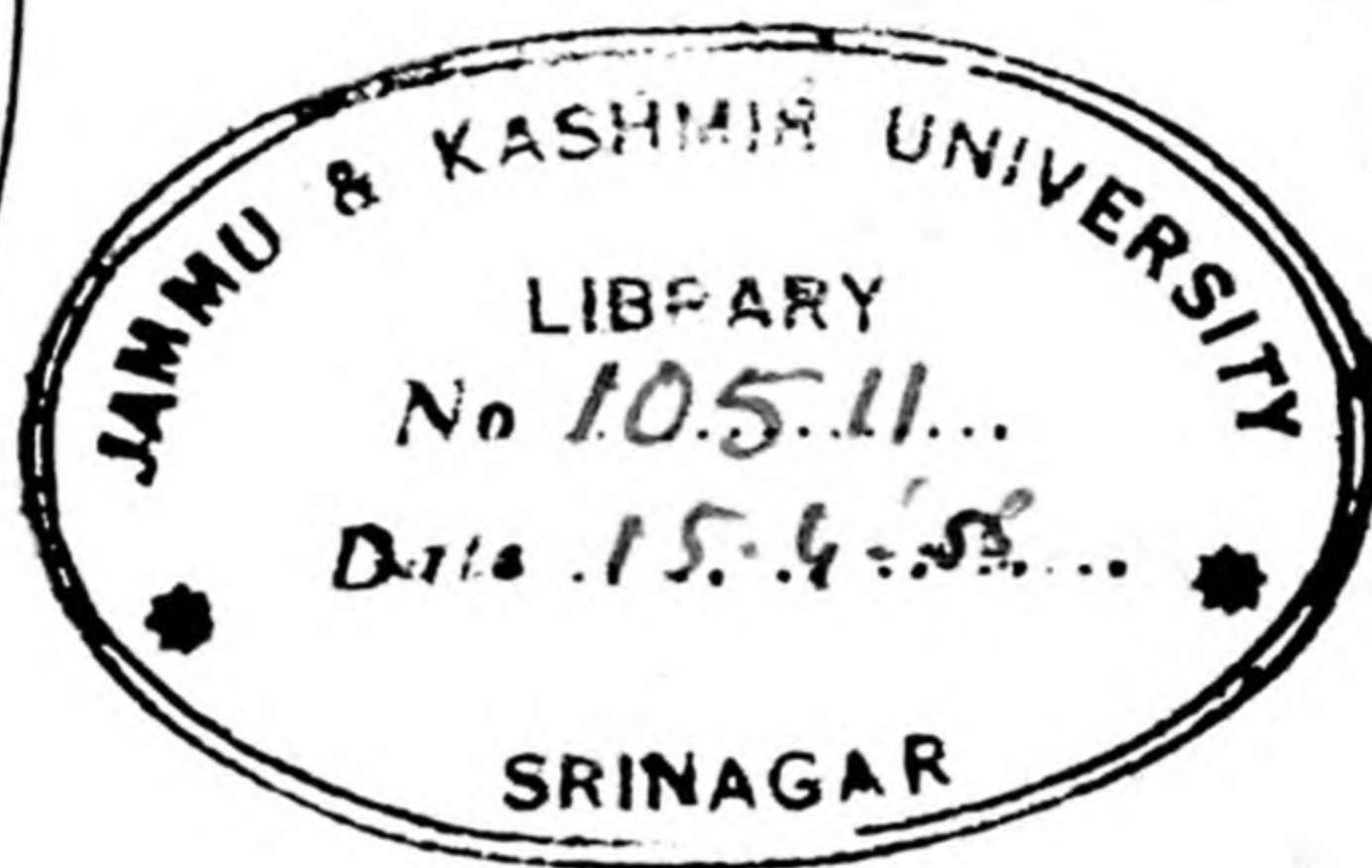


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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THIS volume comprises a collection of eleven articles reprinted from three well-known works on Indian History. The first eight chapters are reprints from Mountstuart Elphinstone's *The History of India*, 9th edition, 1911, edited by E. B. Cowell, formerly Principal, Sanskrit College, Calcutta. Besides making certain notes and additions for the Hindu period, Cowell added a few appendices on some of the more important points omitted by the author, more specially on the accounts supplied by the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims. These appendices are all reprinted in this volume.

The articles in the ninth and eleventh chapters are selected from W. W. Hunter's *The Indian Empire : Its Peoples, History and Products*, Third Edition, 1882, and the article constituting the tenth chapter is a reprint from J. Talbois Wheeler's *The History of India from the Earliest Ages*, First Edition, 1881.

The text of the authors chosen for selection has been adhered to faithfully, except that it has been found necessary to make slight omissions here and there indicated by dots.

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CHAPTER I

THE AGE OF MANU AND THE VEDAS

BY M. ELPHINSTONE

Age of the Vedas—Age of the Institutes

The value of Manu's code, as a picture of the state of society, depends entirely on its having been written in ancient times, as it pretends. Before settling its date, it is necessary to endeavour to fix that of the Vedas, to which it so constantly refers. From the manner in which it speaks of those sacred poems, we may conclude that they had long existed in such a form as to render them of undisputed authority, and binding on the conscience of all Hindus.

Most of the hymns composing the Vedas are in a language so rugged as to prove that they were written before that of the other sacred writings was completely formed; while some, though antiquated, are within the pale of the polished Sanscrit. There must, therefore, have been a considerable interval between the composition of the greater part and the compilation of the whole. It is of the compilation alone that we can hope to ascertain the age.

Sir William Jones attempts to fix the date of the composition of the Yajur Veda by counting the lives of forty sages, through whom its doctrines were transmitted, from the time of Parasara; whose epoch again is fixed by a celestial observation: but his reasoning is not convincing. He supposes the Yajur Veda to have been written in 1580 before Christ. The completion of the compilation he fixes in the twelfth century before Christ; and all the other European writers who have examined the question fix the age of the compiler, Vyasa, between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries before Christ. The Hindus themselves unanimously declare him to have lived at least 3001 years before Christ.

The superior accuracy of the opinion held by the Europeans appears to be put out of all doubt by a passage discovered by Colebrooke. In every Veda there is a sort of astronomical treatise, the object of which is to explain the adjustment of the calendar, for the purpose of fixing the proper periods for the performance of religious duties. There can be little doubt that the last editor of those treatises would avail himself of the

observations which were most relied on when he wrote, and would explain them by means of the computation of time most intelligible to his readers. Now, the measure of time employed in those treatises is itself a proof of their antiquity, for it is a cycle of five years of lunar months, with awkward divisions, intercalations, and other corrections, which show it to contain the rudiments of the calendar which now, after successive corrections, is received by the Hindus throughout India; but the decisive argument is, that the place assigned to the solstitial points in the treatises (which is given in detail by Colebrooke) is that in which those points were situated in the fourteenth century before Christ.¹ Colebrooke's interpretation of this passage has never, I believe, been called in question; and it would be difficult to find any grounds for suspecting the genuineness of the text itself. The ancient form of the calendar is beyond the invention of the Hindu forger, and there could be no motive to coin a passage, fixing in the fourteenth century before Christ a work which all Hindus assign to the thirty-first century of the same era.

In an essay previously written,² Colebrooke has shown, from another passage in the Vedas, that the correspondence of seasons with months, as there stated, indicated a position of the cardinal points similar to that which has just been mentioned; and, on that ground, he had fixed the compilation of the Vedas at the same period which he afterwards ascertained by more direct proof.

From the age of the Vedas, thus fixed, we must endeavour to discover that of Manu's Code. Sir William Jones³ examines the difference in the dialect of those two compositions; and from the time occupied by a corresponding change in the Latin language, he infers that the Code of Manu must have been written 300 years after the compilation of the Vedas. This reasoning is not satisfactory, because there is no ground for believing that all languages proceed at the same uniform rate in the progress of refinement. All that can be assumed is, that a considerable period must have elapsed between the epochs at which the ruder and the more refined idioms were in use. The

¹ *Asiatic Researches*, vol. viii. p. 489. Archdeacon Pratt (*J. A. S. Bengal*, 1862, p. 51) has re-examined the astronomical question, and fixes the date as 1181 B.C.; but the truth is that these ancient observations must have been too loose to allow of our drawing conclusions from them without allowing a margin of several centuries. See Prof. Whitney's paper in *J. R. A. S.*, 1865.—Cowell.]

² *Ibid.*, vol. vii. p. 283.

³ *Preface to Manu*, p. 6.

next ground for conjecturing the date of Manu's Code rests on the difference between the law and manners there recorded, and those of modern times. This will be shown to be considerable; and from the proportion of the changes which will also be shown to have taken place before the invasion of Alexander, we may infer that a long time had passed between the promulgation of the Code and the latter period. On a combination of these data, we may perhaps be allowed to fix the age of the supposed Manu, very loosely, at some time about halfway between Alexander (in the fourth century before Christ) and the Vedas (in the fourteenth).

This would make the author of the Code live about 900 years before Christ.

That the Code is very ancient is proved by the difference of religion and manners from those of present times, no less than by the obsolete style.

That these are not disguises, assumed to conceal a modern forgery, appears from the difficulty with which consistency could be kept up, especially when we have the means of checking it by the accounts of the Greeks, and from the absence of all motive for forgery, which of itself is perhaps conclusive.

A Brahmin, forging a code, would make it support the system established in his time, unless he were a reformer, in which case he would introduce texts favourable to his new doctrines; but neither would pass over the most popular innovations in absolute silence, nor yet inculcate practices repugnant to modern notions.

Yet the religion of Manu is that of the Vedas. Rama, Krishna, and other favourite gods of more recent times, are not mentioned either with reverence or with disapprobation, nor are the controversies hinted at to which those and other new doctrines gave rise. There is no mention of regular orders, or of the self-immolation of widows. Brahmins eat beef and flesh of all kinds, and intermarry with women of inferior castes, besides various other practices repulsive to modern Hindus, which are the less suspicious because they are minute.

These are all the grounds on which we can guess at the age of this Code. That of Manu himself is of no consequence, since his appearance is merely dramatic, like that of Krishna in the "Bhagavad Gita," or of the speakers in Plato's or Cicero's dialogues. No hint is given as to the real compiler, nor is there any clue to the date of the ancient commentator Kulluka. From his endeavouring to gloss over and to explain away some doctrines of Manu, it is evident that opinion had already begun to change in his time; but as many commentators, and some of very

ancient date,⁴ speak of the rules of Manu as applicable to the good ages only, and not extending to their time, and as such a limitation never once occurs to Kulluka, we must conclude that commentator, though a good deal later than the original author, to have lived long before the other jurists whose opinions have just been alluded to.

On a careful perusal of the Code, there appears nothing inconsistent with the age attributed to it. It may, perhaps, be said that the very formation of a code, especially in so methodical a manner, is unlike ancient times; and it is certain that a people must have subsisted for some time, and must have established laws and customs, before it could frame a code. But the Greeks, and other nations whose history we know, formed codes at a comparatively earlier period of their national existence; and although the arrangement as well as the subject of Manu's Code show considerable civilization, yet this is no proof of recent origin, more than rudeness is of antiquity. The Romans were more polished 2000 years ago than the Esquimaux are now, or perhaps may be 2000 years hence.

[The Institutes of Manu are only one of the many Smritis or Dharmaśāstras. The very form in which they are composed, the epic sloka, proves their comparatively modern origin. The latest productions of the Vaidik period were the Sūtras, or the ceremonial rules current in different families. These, when complete, are divided into three portions,—the Śrauta, which treats of the great sacrifices; the Grihya, which treats of the domestic purifications, etc.; and the Samayacharika, which treats of temporal duties and customs. The last seems to have been mainly the source of these Dharmaśāstras. The Manavas are a subdivision of the Taittirīyakas, or followers of the Black Yajur Veda, and the Śrauta portion of the Manava Kalpa-sūtras still exists, but the other portions seem to be lost. But in the Sūtras of the Apastambas (another subdivision of the Taittirīyakas), in which the three portions are extant complete, we find that “the Sūtras contain generally almost the same words, which have been brought into verse by the compiler of the Manava-dharma-śāstra.” The so-called “Institutes of Manu,” may therefore be considered as the last redaction of the traditional laws of the Manavas. That ours is only one of many, probably successive, redactions, seems evident by the frequent quotations in old authors from lost works, called the Vrihat or great Manu, and Vṛiddha or old Manu. As for the date of the compilation in its present form, we have no data to rest upon, since it is a *rifacimento* of

⁴ See note at the end of Sir W. Jones's translation.

older materials; but the third century before Christ is certainly nearer to the truth than the ninth or tenth. We must not, however, forget, in estimating its historical value, that it was undoubtedly composed from older documents, and, although some parts may be comparatively modern, the great mass of the work does faithfully represent the spirit and character of the old Hindu world, after the caste system had become thoroughly established. See this subject more fully treated in Prof. Max Muller's *Ancient Sanskrit Lit.* pp. 61, 132—134; and his letter in Morley's *Digest*, *Introd.* p. cxcvii.—Cowell.]

CHAPTER II

CHANGES IN CASTE

BY M. ELPHINSTONE

Doubts regarding the foreign descent of any of the Rajput tribes
—Scythian settlers in India

Among the changes in caste, I have not noticed one which, if proved, is of much greater importance than all the rest: I allude to the admission of a body of Scythians into the Kshatriya class, which is asserted by Colonel Tod,¹ and in part acceded to by a very able writer in the "Oriental Magazine."² Colonel Tod is entitled to every respect, on account of his zeal for Oriental knowledge, and the light he has thrown on a most interesting country, almost unknown till his time; and the anonymous writer is so evidently a master of his subject, that it is possible he may be familiar with instances unknown to me of the admission of foreigners into Hindu castes. Unless this be the case, however, I am obliged to differ from the opinion advanced, and can only show my estimation of those who maintain it, by assigning my reasons at length. If the supposition be, that the whole Hindu people sprang from the same root with the Scythians, before those nations had assumed their distinctive peculiarities, I shall not conceive myself called on to discuss the question; but if such a union is said to have taken place within the historic period, I shall be inclined to doubt the fact. The admission of strangers into any of the twice-born classes was a thing never contemplated by Manu, and could not have taken place within the period to which the records of his time extended. No trace of the alleged amalgamation remained in Alexander's time; for though he and his followers visited India after having spent two years in Scythia, they discovered no resemblance between any parts of those nations. The union must therefore have taken place within a century or two before our era, or at some later period. This is the supposition on which Colonel Tod has gone in some places, though in others he mentions Scythian immigrations in the sixth century before Christ, and others at more remote periods.

¹ *History of Rajasthan*, vol. i.

² *Vol. iv. p. 33 and vol. viii. p. 19*

That there were Scythian irruptions into India before those of the Moghuls under Chengiz Khan is so probable, that the slightest evidence would induce us to believe them to have occurred; and we may be satisfied with the proofs afforded us that the Scythians, after conquering Bactria, brought part of India under their dominion; but the admission of a body of foreigners into the proudest of the Hindu classes, and that after the line had been as completely drawn as it was in the Code of Manu, is so difficult to imagine, that the most direct and clear proofs are necessary to substantiate it. Now, what are the proofs?—

1. That four of the Rajput tribes have a fable about their descent, from which, if all Hindu fables had a meaning, we might deduce that they came from the west, and that they did not know their real origin.

2. That some of the Rajputs certainly did come from the west of the Indus.

3. That the religion and manners of the Rajputs resemble those of the Scythians.

4. That the names of some of the Rajput tribes are Scythian.

5. That there were, by ancient authorities, Indo-Scythians on the Lower Indus in the second century.

6. That there were white Huns in Upper India in the time of Cosmas Indico-Pleustes (sixth century).

7. That De Guignes mentions, on Chinese authorities, the conquest of the country on the Indus by a body of Yue-chi or Getæ, and that there are still Jits on both sides of that river.

1. The first of these arguments is not given as conclusive; and it is obvious that native tribes, as well as foreign, might be ignorant of their pedigree, or might wish to improve it by a fable, even if known. The scene of the fable carries us no nearer to Scythia than Abu, in the north of Guzerat; and few, if any, of the tribes which Colonel Tod describes as Scythians belong to the *four* to whom only it applies.

2. The great tribe of Yadu, which is the principal, perhaps the only one, which came from beyond the Indus, is the tribe of Krishna, and of the purest Hindu descent. There is a story of their having crossed to the west of the Indus after the death of Krishna. One division (the Sama) certainly came from the west, in the seventh or eighth century, but they were Hindus before they crossed the Indus; and many of those who still remain on the west, though now Mahomedans, are allowed to be of

Hindu descent.³ Alexander found two bodies of Indians west of the Indus,—one in Paropamisus, and one near the sea; and, though both were small and unconnected, yet the last-mentioned alone is sufficient to account for all the immigrations of Rajputs into India, without supposing aid from Scythia.

3. If the religion and manners of any of the Rajputs resemble those of the Scythians, they incomparably more closely resemble those of the Hindus. Their language also is Hindu, without a Scythian word (as far as has yet been ascertained). I have not heard of any part of their religion, either, that is not purely Hindu. In fact, all the points in which they are said to resemble the Scythians are common to all the Rajputs without exception, and most of them to the whole Hindu race. On the other hand, the points selected as specimens of Scythian manners are for the most part common to all rude nations. Many, indeed, are expressly brought forward as Scandinavian or German; although an identity of manners between those nations and the eastern Scythians is still to be proved, even supposing their common origin.

If, instead of searching for minute points of resemblance, we compare the general character of the two nations, it is impossible to imagine any two things less alike.

The Scythian is short, square-built, and sinewy, with a broad face, high cheekbones, and long narrow eyes, the outer angles of which point upwards. His home is a tent; his occupation, pasturage; his food, flesh, cheese, and other productions of his flocks; his dress is of skins or wool; his habits are active, hardy, roving, and restless. The Rajput, again, is tall, comely, loosely built, and, when not excited, languid and lazy. He is lodged in a house, and clad in thin showy fluttering garments; he lives on grain, is devoted to the possession of land, never moves but from necessity; and though often in or near the desert, he never engages in the care of flocks and herds, which is left to inferior classes.

4. Resemblances of name, unless numerous and supported by other circumstances, are the very lowest sort of evidence; yet in this case, we have hardly even them. Except Jit, which will be adverted to, the strongest resemblance is in the name of a now obscure tribe called Hun to that of the horde which the Romans called Huns; or to that of the great nation of the Turks, once called by the Chinese Hien-yun or Hiong-nou. The Huns, though now almost extinct, were once of some conse-

³ *Tod*, vol. i. p. 85; *Pottinger*, pp. 392, 393; *Ayeen Acbery*, vol. ii. p. 132.

quence, being mentioned in some ancient inscriptions: but there is nothing besides their name to connect them either with the Huns or the Hiong-nou. It might seem an argument against the Hindu origin of the Rajputs, that the names of few of their tribes are explainable in Sanscrit. But are they explainable in any Tartar language? and are all names confessedly Hindu capable of explanation?

5. We may admit, without hesitation, that there were Scythians on the Indus in the second century, but it is not apparent how this advances us a single step towards their transformation into Rajputs: there have long been Persians and Afghans and English in India, but none of them have found a place among the native tribes.

6. Cosmas, a mere mariner, was not likely to be accurate in information about the upper parts of India; and the White Huns (according to De Guignes⁴) were Turks, whose capital was Organj or Khiva: it does not seem improbable, therefore, that he confounded the Getæ with the Huns; but his evidence, even if taken literally, only goes to prove that the name of Hun was known in Upper India; and along with that, it proves that up to the sixth century the people who bore it had not merged in the Rajputs.

7. The account of De Guignes has every appearance of truth. It not only explains the origin of the Scythians on the Indus, but shows us what became of them, and affords the best proof that they were not swallowed up in any of the Hindu classes.⁵ The people called the Yue-chi by the Chinese, Jits by the Tartars, and Getes or Getæ by some of our writers, were a considerable nation in the centre of Tartary as late as the time of Tamerlane. In the second century before Christ they were driven from their original seats on the borders of China by the Hiong-nou, with whom they had always been at enmity. About 126 B.C. a division of them conquered Khorasan in Persia; and about the same time the Su, another tribe whom they had dislodged in an early part of their advance, took Bactria from the Greeks. In the first years of the Christian era, the Yue-chi came from some of their conquests in Persia into the country on the Indus, which is correctly described by the Chinese historians. This portion of them is represented to have settled there; and, accordingly, when Tamerlane (who was accustomed to fight the

⁴ Vol. ii. p. 325.

⁵ De Guignes, *Histoire des Huns*, vol. ii. p. 41; but still more, *Academie des Inscriptions*, vol. xxv., with the annexed paper by D'Anville.

Jits in Tartary) arrived at the Indus, he recognized his old antagonists in their distant colony.⁶ They still bear the name of Jits or Jats,⁷ and are still numerous on both sides of the Indus, forming the peasantry of the Panjab, the Rajput country, Sind, and the east of Baluchistan; and, in most places, professing the Mussulman religion.

The only objection that has been brought forward to the Getic origin of the Jats is, that they are included in some lists of the Rajput tribes, and so enrolled among pure Hindus; but Colonel Tod, from whom we learn the fact, desroys the effect of it, by stating⁸ that, though their name is in the list, they are never considered as Rajputs, and that no Rajput would intermarry with them. In another place,⁹ he observes that (except for one very ambiguous rite) they were "utter aliens to the Hindu theocracy," and he himself maintains that they are descended from the Getæ. Their language, however, if it proves to be unmixed Hindu, will furnish a strong though not insuperable objection.

It is a more natural way of connecting the immigration of Rajputs from the west with the invasion of the Getæ, to suppose that part of the tribes who are recorded to have crossed the Indus at an early period, and who probably were those found in the south by Alexander, were dislodged by the irruption from Scythia, and driven back to their ancient seats to join their brethren, from whom, in religion and caste, they had never separated.

My conclusion, therefore, is that the Jats may be of Scythian descent, but that the Rajputs are all pure Hindus.

⁶ *Sherf ud din*, quoted by De Guignes, *Academie des Inscriptions*, vol. xxv., p. 32.

⁷ Not Jats, which is the name of a tribe near Agra, not now under discussion. [Sir H. Elliot, in his *Supplement to the Indian Glossary*, maintains that the Jats of the Indus and the Jats of Bhurtpoor are of the same origin.—Cowell.]

⁸ Vol. i. p. 106.

⁹ Vol. ii. p. 180.

CHAPTER III

THE GREEK ACCOUNTS OF INDIA

BY M. ELPHINSTONE

Before we examine the account of India given by the Greeks, it is necessary to ascertain of what country they speak when they make use of that name.

Most of the writers about Alexander call the inhabitants of the hilly region to the south of the main ridge of Caucasus, and near the Indus, Indians; and also mentioned another Indian tribe or nation, who inhabited the sea-shore on the western side of the Indus. Each of those two tribes occupied a territory stretching for 150 miles west from the river, but narrow from north to south. A great tract of country lay between their territories, and was inhabited by a people foreign to their race. Close to the Indus, however, especially on the lower part of its course, there were other Indian tribes, though less considerable than those two.

The Indians on the sea-shore were named Oritæ and Arabitæ, and are recognized by Major Rennell as the people called Asiatic Ethiopians by Herodotus. Their country was the narrow tract between the mountains of Baluchistan and the sea, separated from Mekran on the west by the range of hills which form Cape Arboo, and on which still stands the famous Hindu temple of Hinglez.

The Indians whom Herodotus includes within the satrapies of Darius are, probably, the more northern ones under Caucasus, for he expressly declares, that those on the south were independent of the Persian monarchy.¹ It is proved by Major Rennell that his knowledge of India did not reach beyond the desert east of the Indus;² and he seems to have had no conception of the extent of the country and no clear notion of the portion of it which had been subjected to Persia.³ The other Greek writers,

¹ *Thalia*, 101, 102.

² *Geography of Herodotus*, p. 309.

³ *The Indians east of the Indus constantly maintained to the followers of Alexander that they had never before been invaded (by human conquerors at least), an assertion which they could not have ventured if they had just been delivered from the yoke of Persia.*

though they speak of Indians beyond the Indus, strictly limit *India* to the eastern side of that river. Arrian, who has called the mountaineers Indians, from the place where Alexander entered Paropamisus, yet when he comes to the Indus says, "This river Alexander crossed at daybreak with his army into the land of the Indians," and immediately begins a description of the people of that country.⁴

In the course of this description he again explicitly declares that the Indus is the western boundary of India from the mountains to the sea.⁵

In his "*Indica*," also, he desires his reader to consider *that* only as India which lies east of the Indus, and those who inhabit that country as the Indians of whom he is about to speak.⁶

Strabo, the most critical and judicious of all the writers on India, is as decided in pronouncing the Indus to be the western limit of India from the mountains to the sea; and quotes Eratosthenes as supporting his opinion.⁷

Pliny, indeed, states that some consider the four satrapies of Gedrosia, Arachosia, Aria, and Paropamisus to belong to India; but this would include about two-thirds of Persia.

The Sanscrit writers confirm the opinion of the Greeks regarding the Indus as the western boundary of their country, and classing the nations beyond it with the Yavanas and other barbarians. There is, indeed, a universally acknowledged tradi-

Arrian, also, in discussing the alleged invasions of Bacchus, Hercules, Sesostris, Semiramis, and Cyrus, denies them all except the mythological ones; and Strabo denies even those, adding that the Persians hired mercenaries from India, but never invaded it. (Arrian, Indica, 8, 9; Strabo, lib. xv., near the beginning. See also Diodorus, lib. ii. p. 123, edition of 1604).

I have not been able to discover the grounds on which it is sometimes said that the Persians were in possession of India as far as the Jumna or Ganges. The weighty opinion of Major Rennell (which, however, applies only to the Panjab) rests on the single argument of the great tribute said to have been paid by the Indians, which he himself proves to have been overstated. (Geography of Herodotus, p. 305).

⁴ *Expedition Alexandri, lib. v. cap. 4.*

⁵ *Ibid. lib. v. cap. 6.*

⁶ *Indica, cap. ii.*—"But the part from the Indus towards the east, let that be India, and let those [who inhabit it] be the Indians."

⁷ *Strabo, lib. xv. pp. 473, 474, ed. 1587. In lib. xv. p. 497, he again mentions the Indus as the eastern boundary of Persia.*

tion, that no Hindu ought to cross that river;⁸ and its inconsistency with the practice even of early times is a proof of its great antiquity.

It is clear, therefore, that the Indians beyond the Indus were few and detached; and we will now see what account is given of them by the ancients, beginning our survey from the north.

Arrian, in the commencement of his "Indica," mentions the Assaceni and the Astaceni, as Indian nations in the mountains between the Indus and the Cophenes, but he distinguishes them from the other Indians as being less in size and fairer in complexion. He excludes them (as has been shown) from his general description of the Indians; and neither in his "Expedition of Alexander" nor in his "Indica" does he allude to Brahmins among them, or mention anything in their customs of a marked Hindu character. He says that they had been subject to the Assyrians, afterwards to the Medes, and finally to the Persians. It does not appear from Arrian that there were any Indians to the south of the Cophenes (or river of Kabul) and it might be inferred from Strabo that there were none between the Paropamisadæ and the Oritæ until after Alexander's time;⁹ but as Arrian mentions other tribes on the lower Indus, it is probable that Strabo spoke generally of the two territories, and did not mean entirely to deny the residence of Indians on the Persian bank.

⁸ See a verse on this subject quoted in Colonel Wilford's essay on Caucasus (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. vi. p. 585). The Colonel, who is anxious to extend the early possessions of the Hindus, endeavours to prove that the Indus meant in this verse is the river of Kama (one of its tributary streams); that the main Indus may have changed its bed; that the prohibition was only against crossing the Indus, and not against passing to the other side by going round its source; and, finally, that, in modern times, the prohibition is disregarded: but he never denies the existence of the restriction, or asserts that it was not at one time attended to.

⁹ Lib. xv. p. 474. The passage states, from Eratosthenes, that, at the time of Alexander's invasion, the Indus was the boundary of India and Ariana, and that the Persians possessed all the country to the west of the river; but that, afterwards, the Indians received a considerable part of Persia from the Macedonians. He explains the transfer more particularly on page 498, where he says that Alexander took this country from the Persians, and kept it to himself, but that Seleucus subsequently ceded it to Sandracottus.

The Oritæ, according to Arrian,¹⁰ were an Indian nation, who extended for about 150 miles parallel to the sea. They wore the dress and arms of the other Indians, but differed from them in language and manners.

They (those near the Indus at least) must have been essentially Indian; for Sambus, the chief of the branch of hills which run down to the river in the north of Sind, is represented as being much under the influence of the Brahmins.

It will throw some light on the tribes that occupied the west bank of the Indus in former times to point out its present inhabitants.

The mountains under Caucasus, between the point where it is crossed by the continuation of Mount Imaus, which forms the range of Soliman, and the Indus, are inhabited by a people of Indian descent, now subject to Afghan tribes, who have conquered the territory in comparatively recent times.¹¹ The upper part of the mountains farther north is possessed by the Cafirs, another nation who, from the close connexion between their language and Sanscrit, appear to be of the Indian race. Their religion, however, though idolatrous, has no resemblance whatever to that of the Hindus.

Throughout the whole of *the plain* to the west of the Indus, from the range of Caucasus to the sea, the greater part of the original population are Jats, whose descent from the Getæ has been discussed above, but who speak an Indian language, and are now classed with the Indians by their western neighbours. The hills which bound that plain on the west are everywhere held by tribes of a different origin. Some of the so-called Indians are Hindus, but the greater part are converts to the Mahomedan religion. The above description comprehends the whole of the country of the ancient Oritæ.

If from a general view of these accounts, ancient and modern, we were to speculate on the first settlement of the people to whom they relate, it might, perhaps, appear not improbable that the Indians in the northern mountains were of the same race as the Hindus, but never converted to the Brahminical religion, and that they may have occupied their present seats before the period at which the first light breaks on the history of their brethren in the plains: but it is enough to allude to so vague a

¹⁰ *Exped. Alexandri, lib. vi. c. xxi.; Indica, cap. xxv.*

¹¹ *This is somewhat less than was occupied by the Indians described by Arrian, who extended west to the Cophenes, probably the river of Panjshir, north of Cabul.*

conjecture.¹² The Indian races in the plains probably crossed from India at different periods. Notwithstanding the religious prohibition and the testimony of Strabo, it is difficult to believe that the easy communication afforded by a navigable river would not lead the inhabitants of whichever neighbouring country was first peopled and civilized to spread over both banks. I am therefore led to think the occupation of the western bank by the Indians began very early, the neighbouring countries on that side being scarcely peopled even now. The emigration towards the mouth of the Indus, which seems to have been more extensive than elsewhere, may possibly be that alluded to in the ancient legends about the flight of Krishna's family. A branch of this tribe certainly came from the west into Sind ten centuries ago; and other divisions, still retaining their religion and caste, have passed over into Guzerat in later times.¹³

To remove some doubts about the limits of the Indian nations on the west of the Indus, it is desirable to advert to a part of Alexander's route through the adjoining countries.

Alexander set out from Artachoana (which seems to be admitted to be Herat), and proceeded in pursuit of one of the murderers of Darius to the royal city of the Zarangæi, which is recognized in Zarang, an ancient name for the capital of Sistan. He thence directed his march towards Bactria, and on his way received the submission of the Drangæ, the Gedrosians, and the Arachotians. He then came to the Indians bordering on the Arachotians. Through *all* these nations he suffered much from snow and want of provisions. He next proceeded to Caucasus, at the foot of which he founded Alexandria, and afterwards crossed the mountains into Bactria."¹⁴

The Drangæ are probably the same as the Zarangæ; Ara-

¹² [This subject is discussed in Muir's *Sanscrit Texts*, vol. ii. pp. 367—370. Hindu writers recognized many of the tribes to the west of the Indus as degraded Kshatriyas, and they considered some of them, as e.g., the Kambojas, to speak a dialect of Sanscrit. —Cowell.]

¹³ Colonel Tod, vol. i. pp. 85, 86; vol. ii. pp. 220 (note), 312. Captain M'Murdo, *Bombay Transactions*, vol. ii. p. 219.

In speaking of the Hindus above, I do not allude to the modern emigrants now found scattered through the countries on the west of the Indus as far as Moscow; neither do I discuss what other settlements of that people may have been effected between the time of Alexander and the present day.

¹⁴ Arrian, lib. iii. cap. xxviii.

chotia is explained by Strabo¹⁵ to extend to the Indus; and Gedrosia certainly lay along the sea. There are two ways from Sistan to Bactria—one by Herat, and the other by the pass of Hindu Kush, north of Kabul, the mountains between those points being impassable, especially in winter, when this march took place.¹⁶ Alexander took the eastern road; and if he had marched direct to Bactria, as might be supposed from the preceding passage, he could have met with no snow at any time of the year, until he got a good deal to the east of Kandahar, and he must have left Gedrosia very far to his right. It is possible, therefore (especially as the murderer of whom he was in pursuit was made over to him *by the Indians*¹⁷), that he continued his pursuit through Shorabak and the valley of Bolan (the route adopted by Conolly¹⁸); and that the Indians near the Arachotians may have been about Dader, which, although at a distance from the Indus, is on the plain of that river, and may not improbably have been inhabited by an Indian race. From this place his journey to Mount Caucasus would have lain through a country as sterile, and at that season as cold, as Caucasus itself. It is equally probable, however, that Alexander did not extend his journey so far to the south; and, in that case, the Indians would be (as they are assumed to be by Curtius¹⁹) those called Paropamisadæ, immediately under Mount Caucasus, within or near whose boundary Alexandria certainly was built.²⁰ The vicinity of this people shows that Alexandria could not have been farther west than Kabul, which, indeed, is also proved by the fact of Alexander's returning to it on his way from Bactria to India.²¹ He took seventeen days to cross Caucasus, according to Curtius; fifteen according to Strabo, from Alexandria to Adraspa, a city in Bactriana; and ten to cross the mountains in returning, according to Arrian. Captain Burnes, with none of the encumbrances of an army, took twelve days to cross the mountains on the road from Kabul to Balkh, which is comparatively shorter and

¹⁵ *Lib. xi. p. 355, edition of 1587.*

¹⁶ *See Clinton's Fasti, B.C. 330. Darius was killed in July, and Alexander reached Bactria in spring.*

¹⁷ *Arrian, ubi supra.*

¹⁸ *Since made familiar by the march of Lord Keane's army.*

¹⁹ *Quintus Curtius, lib. vii. cap. iii.*

²⁰ *Arrian, lib. iv. cap. xxii.*

²¹ *Alexander was probably at Begram, 25 miles N. 15 E. from Kabul, the ruins of which are described in a memoir by Mason, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, vol. v. p. 1.*

easier than any more western pass. As far as this site for Alexandria, rather than one farther west, we are borne out by the high authority of Major Rennell; but that author (the greatest of English geographers), from the imperfect information then possessed about the stream that runs from Ghazni to Kabul, the Gomai, and the Kurram, has framed out of those three an imaginary river, which he supposes to run from near Bamian to the Indus, thirty or forty miles south of Attoc. This he calls the Cophenes, and, in consequence, places the scene of Alexander's operations and the seat of the Indian mountaineers to the south of the Kabul river, and at a distance from the range of Caucasus or Paropamisus. Strabo, however, expressly says that Alexander kept as near as he could to the northern mountains, that he might cross the Choaspes (which falls into the Cophenes) and the other rivers as high up as possible. Arrian makes him cross the Cophenes, and then proceed through a mountainous country, and over three other rivers which fell into the Cophenes, before he reaches the Indus. In his "*Indica*," also, he mentions the Cophenes as bringing those three rivers with it, and joining the Indus in Peucaliotis. It is only on the north bank of the Kabul river that three such rivers can be found; and even then there will be great difficulty in fixing their names, for in Arrian's own two lists he completely changes the names of two. Nor is this at all surprising, for most rivers in that part of the country have no name, but are called after some town or country on their banks, and not always after the same. Thus the river called by some the Kashkar river is the Kameh with Lieutenant Macartney, the Cheghanserai in Baber's *Commentaries* and is often called the river of Cunner by the inhabitants of the neighbouring country.

The Soastes would seem to be the river of Swat; but then there is no river left for the Guraeus, which is between the Soastes and Indus. Major Rennell, on a different theory, supposes the Guraeus to be the Kabul river itself; but both of Arrian's accounts make the Guraeus fall into the Cophenes, which afterwards falls into the Indus.

The Kabul river, therefore, must be the Cophenes, and the Indians are under the mountains between it, its upper branch (the Punjshir river), and the Indus.

Alexander's proceedings in India are so well known that they cannot be too slightly touched on. After an advance to the Hyphasis, he turned to the south-west, and passed off between the desert and the Indus, having scarcely seen the skirts of India. He made no attempt to establish provinces; but, as he intended to return, he adopted exactly the same policy as that

employed by the Durani Shah in after times. He made a party in the country by dispossessing some chiefs and transferring their territory to their rivals; thus leaving all power in the hands of persons whose interest induced them to uphold his name and conciliate his favour.

The few garrisons he left reminded people of his intended return; and his troops in the nearest parts of Persia would always add to the influence of his partisans.

The adherence of Porus and other princes, who were in a manner set up by the Macedonians, ought therefore to be no matter of surprise.

We now understand the people to whom the Greek descriptions were intended to apply; but we must still be cautious how we form any further opinions regarding that people, on Greek authority alone.

The ancients themselves have set us an example of this caution. Arrian says that he shall place implicit confidence in the accounts of Ptolemy and Aristobulus alone; and in them only when they agree;²² and Strabo, in a very judicious dissertation on the value of the information existing in his time, observes that the accounts of the Macedonians are contradictory and inaccurate, and that those of later travellers are of still less value from the character of the authors, who were ignorant merchants, careless of everything except gain.²³ We may, however, give full credit to the Greek writers when they describe manners and institutions which are still in being, or which are recorded in ancient Hindu books. We may admit, with due allowance for incorrectness, such other accounts as are consistent with those two sources of information; but we must pass by all statements which are not supported by those tests or borne out by their own appearance of truth.

If, however, we discard the fables derived from the Grecian mythology, and those which are contrary to the course of nature, we shall find more reason to admire the accuracy of the early authors than to wonder at the mistakes into which they fell in a country so new and so different from their own, and where they had everything to learn by means of interpreters, generally through the medium of more languages than one.²⁴ Their accounts, as far as they go, of the manners and habits of the

²² *Preface to the "Expedition of Alexander."*

²³ *Beginning of lib. xv. See also lib. ii. p. 48, edition of 1587.*

²⁴ *Onesicritus conversed through three interpreters. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 492, ed. of 1597. From Greek into Persian, and from Persian into Indian, are two that obviously suggest themselves; it is not so*

people, do in fact agree with our own accurate knowledge almost as well as those of most modern travellers prior to the institution of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta.

An example both of the general truth and partial inaccuracy of the Greeks presents itself in the first subject which is to be noticed, agreeably to the order hitherto adopted.

They are well aware of the division into classes, and of the functions of most of them; but, by confounding some distinctions occasioned by civil employment with those arising from that division, they have increased the number from five (including the handicraftsmen, or mixed class) to seven. This number is produced by their supposing the king's councillors and assessors to form a distinct class from the Brahmins; by splitting the class of Vaisya into two, consisting of shepherds and husbandmen; by introducing a caste of spies; and by omitting the servile class altogether. With these exceptions, the classes are in the state described by Manu, which is the groundwork of that still subsisting.

Their first caste is that of the Sophists, or religious and literary class, of whose peculiar occupations they give a correct view.²⁵ But they do not clearly understand the extent of the Brahmin caste, and have, perhaps, confounded the Brahmins²⁶ with the monastic orders.

The first mistake originates in their ignorance of the four-fold division of a Brahmin's life. Thus they speak of men who had been for many years Sophists, marrying and returning to common life (alluding probably to a student who, having completed the austerities of the first period, becomes a householder); and they suppose, as has been mentioned, that those who were the king's councillors and judges formed a separate class. It is evident, also, that they classed the Brahmins who exercised civil and military functions with the castes to whom these employments properly belonged. They describe the Sophists as the most honoured class, exempt from all burdens, and only contributing their prayers to the support of the state. They inform us that

easy to conjecture for what languages the third interpreter was required. [Probably a connecting link would be required between Persian and Indian.—Cowell.]

²⁵ *Arrian (lib. vi. cap. xvi.) explains that the Brahmins are the Sophists of the Indians; and the two terms are used indiscriminately both by him and Strabo.*

²⁶ *From this charge I must exempt Nearchus, who seems to have had a clear conception of the division of the Brahmins into religious and secular. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 493, ed. 1587.*

their assistance is necessary at all private sacrifices; and correctly describe them as having ceremonies performed for them while yet in the womb,²⁷ as undergoing a strict education, and as passing a moderate and abstinent life in groves, on beds of rushes (kusha grass), or skins (deer skins); during which time they listen to their instructors in silence and with respect.

They erroneously prolong this period in all cases to thirty-seven, which is the greatest age to which Manu (Chap. III. 1) permits it in any case to extend.

The language ascribed to the Sophists regarding the present and future state is in a perfectly Brahmin spirit. They place their idea of perfection in independence on everything external, and indifference to death or life, pain or pleasure. They consider this life as that of a child just conceived, and that *real* life does not begin until what we call death. Their only care, therefore, is about their future state. They deny the reality of good and evil, and say that men are not gratified or afflicted by external objects, but by notions of their own, as in a dream.²⁸

They appear to have possessed separate villages as early as the time of Alexander; to have already assumed the military character on occasions, and to have defended themselves with that fury and desperation which sometimes still characterises Hindus.²⁹ Their interference in politics, likewise, is exhibited by their instigating Sambus to fly from Alexander, and Musicanus to break the peace he had concluded with that conqueror.³⁰ Strabo mentions a sect called Pramnæ, who were remarkable for being disputatious, and who derided the Brahmins for their attention to physics and astronomy. He considers them as a separate class, but they were probably Brahmins themselves, only attached to a particular school of philosophy.³¹

Religious ascetics are often spoken of, under the different names of Brachmanes, Germanes, and Sophists; but it does not very clearly appear whether they were merely Brahmins in the two last stages of their life, or whether they were members of

²⁷ *Manu*, ii. 26, 27.

²⁸ *Strabo*, lib. xv. p. 490, ed. 1587.

²⁹ *Arrian's Exped. Allexand.*, lib. vi. cap. vii. *Similar instances of the voluntary conflagration of cities, and the devotion of their lives by the inhabitants, are furnished in Indian history down to modern times.*

³⁰ *Arrian*, lib. vi. cap. xvi.

³¹ See *Wilson (Asiatic Researches, vol. xvii. p. 279)*, who derives their name from *Pramanika*, a term applied to the followers of the logical school.

regular monastic establishments. Many of their austerities might be reconciled to the third portion of a Brahmin's life, when he becomes an anchorite; but their ostentatious mortifications, their living in bodies, and several other circumstances, lead rather to a conclusion that they belonged to the monastic orders. The best description of these ascetics is given by Onesicritus,³² who was sent by Alexander to converse with them, in consequence of their refusing to come to him. He found fifteen persons about two miles from the city, naked, and exposed to a burning sun; some sitting, some standing, and some lying, but all remaining immovable from morning till evening, in the attitudes they had adopted.

He happened first to address himself to Calanus,³³ whom he found lying on stones. Calanus received him with that affectation of independence which religious mendicants still often assume, laughed at his foreign habit, and told him that if he wished to converse with him, he must throw off his clothes, and sit down naked on the stones. While Onesicritus was hesitating, Mandanis, the oldest and most holy of the party, came up. He reproved Calanus for his arrogance, and spoke mildly to Onesicritus, whom he promised to instruct in the Indian philosophy, as far as their imperfect means of communication would admit.³⁴ Arrian relates³⁵ that Alexander endeavoured to prevail on Mandanis (whom he calls Dandamis) to attach himself to him as a companion; but that Mandanis refused, replying that India afforded him all he wanted while he remained in his earthly body, and that, when he left it, he should get rid of a troublesome companion.

Calanus had his ambition less under control; he joined Alexander in spite of the remonstrances of his fraternity, who reproached him for entering any other service but that of God.³⁶ He was treated with respect by the Greeks; but, falling sick in Persia, refused, probably from scruples of caste, to observe the regimen prescribed to him, and determined to put an end to his existence by the flames. Alexander, after in vain opposing his intention, ordered him to be attended to the last scene with all honours, and loaded him with gifts, which he distributed among his friends before he mounted the pile. He was carried thither

³² *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 492.*

³³ [Probably Kalyana, as the Greeks gave him the name from his first salutation to them.—Cowell.]

³⁴ *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 492.*

³⁵ *Exped. Alexand. lib. vii. cap. ii.*

³⁶ See *Manu, iv. 63, quoted before, p. 15.*

wearing a garland on his head in the Indian manner, and singing hymns in the Indian language as he passed along. When he had ascended the heap of wood and other combustibles, which had been prepared for him, he ordered it to be set on fire, and met his fate with a serenity that made a great impression on the Greeks.³⁷

Aristobulus³⁸ gives an account of two Sophists, one young and one old, both Brachmanes, whom he met with at Taxila. The elder shaved, the younger wore his hair, and both were followed by disciples. As they passed through the streets they were received with reverence, people pouring oil of sesamum upon them, and offering them cakes of sesamum and honey. Even when they came to Alexander's table to sup in his company, they gave a lesson of resolution, withdrawing to a neighbouring spot, where the elder lay down exposed to the sun and rain, and the younger stood all day on one foot, leaning on a staff.

Other accounts³⁹ describe the ascetics as going about the streets, helping themselves to figs and grapes, and to oil for anointing themselves, entering the houses of the rich, sitting down at their meals, and joining in their discourse; in short, conducting themselves with the same freedom which some persons of that description affect at the present day. They are also spoken of as going naked in winter and summer, and passing their time under banyan trees, some of which, it is said, cover five acres, and are sufficient to shelter 10,000 men.

The practice of twisting up the hair so as to form a turban, which is now confined to one of the monastic orders, is mentioned by Strabo, without any limitation to its use.

It is asserted of the ascetics that they reckoned it disgraceful to be sick,⁴⁰ and put an end to themselves when they fell into that calamity. Megasthenes, however, asserts that the philosophers had no particular approbation of suicide, but rather considered it as a proof of levity; both the opinions of the learned and the occasional practice of the people in that respect seeming to be much the same as they are now.

It is Megasthenes who mentions a class called Germanes,

³⁷ *A similar instance of self-immolation is related by Strabo (lib. xv. p. 495, ed. of 1587), of Zarmanochegus [S'ramanacharya?] an Indian of Barga, who had accompanied an embassy from his own country to Augustus, and burned himself alive at Athens.*

³⁸ *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 491.*

³⁹ *Ibid., p. 492.*

⁴⁰ *Probably as being a proof of guilt in a former state of existence. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 493.*

of whom he treats as forming a distinct body from the Brachmanes. It has been thought that by this separate class he meant the monastic orders; but the name he gives them appears to be corrupted from Sramana, the appellation of the Bauddha and Jaina ascetics, which was written Sarmanes by later Greek authors. This is the more probable as Magasthenes's experience was chiefly gained in Magadha, the cradle of Buddhism, and at the court of Sandracottus, whose grandson Asoka was a convert to that religion, and was the means of establishing its supremacy not only in his own territories, but in a great portion of India. But although the name seems borrowed from the Bauddhas, there is nothing in the description of the class which is not at least as applicable to the Brahmins in the third and fourth periods of their life, or to the monastic orders.

The most honoured of the Germanes, he says, are a class called Hylobii, from living in the woods: who feed on wild fruits and leaves, are clothed in the bark of trees, abstain from all pleasure, and stand motionless for whole days in one posture. The king sends messengers to them to consult them, and to request their intercession with the gods.⁴¹ The next class in honour among the Germanes he states to be the physicians, whose habits seem to correspond with those of the Brahmins of the fourth stage. They live in houses with great abstinence, but without the extreme austerity of the Hylobii. They however exercise themselves in labour and endurance, and sit whole days without the least change in their position. Some of them admit women to share in their meditations, but on a condition of strict chastity; a practice which, though known to the Hindu monastic orders, seems to suit best with those of the Bauddhas. As physicians, their practice resembles that of their modern successors. They rely most on diet and regimen, and next on external applications, having a great distrust of more powerful modes of treatment. Like their successors, also, they employ charms in aid of their medicines. He says that the Germanes perform magical rites and divination, and likewise conduct the ceremonies connected with the dead; some wandering about the towns and villages, and others leading a more refined and settled life. There is nothing in all this that appears to be peculiar to the Bauddhas. It is probable that Megasthenes, although aware of the distinction between that sect, the Brahmins, and the monastic orders,

⁴¹ Compare this with the description of the third portion of a Brahmin's life in Manu. Hylobios is a literal translation of Vana-prastha, "dweller in the woods," which is the usual designation of a Brahmin in the third stage. (Calcutta, Oriental Mag., March, 1827).

had no accurate notion of the points on which they differed; and it is not unlikely that the other early Greek writers may have fallen into a similar confusion. It is, indeed, a remarkable circumstance that the religion of Buddha should never have been expressly noticed by those authors, though it had existed for two centuries before Alexander, and was destined in a century more to be the dominant religion of India. The only explanation is, that the appearance and manners of its followers were not so peculiar as to enable a foreigner to distinguish them from the mass of the people.

It is declared by more authors than one that different castes cannot intermarry, and that it was not permitted for men of one caste to exercise the employment of another, but that all might become Sophists in whatever class they were born.

Such is the present state of the monastic orders; but whether they had so early assumed that form, or whether the ancients (being ignorant that Brahmins could be householders, counsellors, and judges, might on occasion carry arms, or practise other professions) confounded the assumption of ascetic habits by Brahmins previously so employed with the admission of all castes, must remain a doubtful question.⁴²

There is nothing to remark on the other classes, except that the Sudras seem already to have lost their character of a servile class.

Arrian⁴³ mentions with admiration that every Indian is free. With them, as with the Lacedemonians, he says, no Indian can be a slave; but, unlike the Lacedemonians, they keep no other people in servitude. Strabo, who doubts the absence of slavery, as applying to all India, confines his examples of the contrary to domestic slaves, and appears to have no suspicion of the existence of a servile class. It is possible that the mild form in which slavery appeared among the Sudras may have deceived the Greeks, accustomed to so different a system at home; but it is

⁴² Before quitting the subject of the confusion made by the ancients between the Brahmins and monastic orders, it may be observed that some modern writers, even of those best acquainted with the distinction, have not marked it in their works: so that it is often difficult to ascertain from their expressions which they allude to in each case. For much information relating to the ancient accounts of the Hindu priesthood and religion, see Colebrooke, *Asiatic Researches*, vol. ix. p. 296.

⁴³ *Indica*, cap. x. See also Diodorus, lib. ii. p. 124, ed. 1604, where he adds many extravagances about their equality and republican institutions.

still more probable that the remains of the servile condition of the Sudras, which subsisted in Manu's time, may have disappeared entirely before that of Alexander.

The number of independent governments seems to have been as great as at other times. Alexander, in his partial invasion, met with many; and Megasthenes heard that in all India there were 118. Many of these may have been very inconsiderable; but some (the Prasii, for instance) possessed great kingdoms. Most of them seem to have been under rajas, as in Manu's time, and the circumstances of those which the Greeks called republics and aristocracies can easily be explained without supposing anything different from what now exists. There have always been extensive tracts without any common head, some under petty chiefs, and some formed of independent villages; in troubled times, also, *towns* have often for a long period carried on their own government.⁴⁴ All these would be called republics by the Greeks, who would naturally fancy their constitutions similar to what they had seen at home. But what their authors had particularly in view were the independent villages, which were in reality republics, and which would seem aristocratic or democratic as the village community was great or small in proportion to the other inhabitants.⁴⁵ A more perfect example of such villages

⁴⁴ Among those of the first description were the Sikhs (before Ranjit Sing's ascendancy), whom Foster, though familiar with Indian governments, describes as being under a democracy; the chiefs of Shekhawet; and various other petty confederacies of chiefs. Of single villages, the Sondis and Grasias mentioned by Sir John Malcolm (*Account of Malwa*, vol. i. p. 508) furnish examples. The same author alludes to towns in a state such as has been mentioned.

⁴⁵ I extract the following interesting remarks from E. Thomas's paper on the *Sah kings of Saurashtra*: "There is evidence sufficient to the fact of the existence of republics in India in early times, though but few distinct details are extant as to their exact forms of constitution. The republic of which most frequent mention is made is that of Vaisali, which is repeatedly referred to in the *Dulva*, and casual indications are afforded of the powers possessed by the citizens in the time of Sakya. (Csoma de Koros, *As. Res.* xx. 66, 72.) Some curious information on the general subject is also conveyed in the following passage from Csoma de Koros' *Analysis of this work*, *As. Res.* xx. 69.

"The story of Dumbu, a minister (of state) and his king Hphags-skyes-po, in *Lus-Hphags* (Sans. *Videha*). Dumbu escapes to Yangs-pa chan (Vaisali), and settles there. He first declines to give his advice in the assembly of the people there, but afterwards renders them great service by his prudent counsel. . . .

could not be found than existed but lately in Haryana, a country contiguous to those occupied by the Cathaei and Malli in Alexander's time. One of these (Biwani) required, in 1809, a regular siege by a large British force, and would probably have opposed to the Macedonians as obstinate a resistance as Sangala or any of the villages in the adjoining districts, which make so great a figure in the operations of Alexander.

The force ascribed to the Indian kings is probably exaggerated. Porus, one of several who occupied the Panjab, is said to have had 200 elephants, 300 chariots, 4,000 horses, and 30,000 efficient infantry, which, as observed by Sir A. Burnes, is (substituting guns for chariots) exactly the establishment of Ranjit Sing, who was master of the whole Panjab, and several other territories.⁴⁶

"The above-mentioned Dumbu is made chief tribune there, and after his death his second son. His elder son retires to Rajagriha in Magadha."

"Further notices of the republic of Vaisali are to be found in 'Foe Koue Ki,' from which the following may be cited as throwing light on the interesting question of the government of these bodies: 'Il s'agit ici des habitans de la ville de Phi che li (Vaisali) lesquels formaient une republique et s'appelaient en Sanscrit Litchchiwi, ou Litchhe dans la transcription Chinoise. Tchu li tchhe signifie donc tous les Litchchiwi ou la reunion des Litchhe.' (Klaproth, p. 240). Again (Klaproth, note viii. Les Deux Rois, p. 251): 'Il parait que quoique les habitans de Vaisali eussent une forme de gouvernement republicaine, ils avaient pourtant aussi un roi. Les deux rois de notre texte sont donc A tche chi de Magadha, et celui qui etait chef de l'etat des Litchhe ou Litchchiwi de Vaisali.'—Cowell.]

⁴⁶ *As an exaggerated opinion appears to be sometimes entertained of the extent of the territories and dependencies of Porus, it may be worth while to state the limits assigned to them by Arrian and Strabo. His western boundary was the Hydaspes. Beyond that river, in the centre, was his mortal enemy Taxiles: on the north of whose dominions was Abissares, an independent prince whom Arrian calls king of the mountain Indians;¹ and on the south, Sopithes, another independent sovereign, in whose territories the Salt range lay;² so that Porus could possess nothing to the west of the Hydaspes. On the north, his territory extended to the woods under the mountains;³ but it did not include the whole country between the Hydaspes and*

¹ Arrian, lib. v. cap. 8.

² Strabo, lib. xv. p. 481.

³ Ibid., p. 480.

The most that we can concede to Arrian would be, that the armies which he speaks of as permanent were the whole of the tumultuary forces which any of those princes could, in case of necessity, bring into the field. The numbers alleged by Pliny are beyond probability, even on that or any other supposition. The fourfold division of the army (horse, foot, chariots, and elephants) was the same as that of Manu ; but Starbo makes a sextuple division, by adding the commissariat and naval department. The soldiers were all of the military class, were in constant pay during war and peace, and had servants to perform all duties not strictly military. Their horses and arms were supplied by the state (an arrangement very unlike that usually adopted now). It is stated, repeatedly, that they never ravaged the country, and that the husbandmen pursued their occupations undisturbed while hostile armies were engaged in battle. This, though evidently an exaggeration, is probably derived from the Hindu laws of war recorded in Manu, which must have made a strong impression on the Greeks, unaccustomed as they were to so mild and humane a system.

The bravery of the armies opposed to the Greeks is always spoken of as superior to that of other nations with whom they

the Acesines, for besides other tribes who might by possibility be dependent on Porus, there were the Glaucanicæ or Glausæ, who had thirty-seven large cities, and whom Alexander put under Porus ;⁴ thereby adding much country to what he had before possessed.⁵ On the east, between the Acesines and Hydraotes, he had another Porus, who was his bitter enemy.⁶ To the south-east of him were the Cathæi, and other independent nations, against whom he assisted Alexander.⁷ To the south were the Malli, against whom Porus and Abissares had once led their combined forces with those of many others, and had been defeated.⁸

From this it appears that the dominions of Porus were all situated between the Hydaspes and Acesines ; and that his immediate neighbours on every side were independent of him, and most of them at war with him. If he had any dependents, they must have been between the rivers already mentioned, where there were certainly different tribes ; but of those we know that the Glaucanicæ were independent of him, and we have no reason to think the others were dependent.

⁴ Arrian, lib. v. cap. 20.

⁵ Ibid. cap. 21.

⁶ Ibid. cap. 21.

⁷ Ibid. cap. 22, 24.

⁸ Ibid. cap. 22.

had contended in Asia; and the loss acknowledged, though incredibly small, is much greater in the Indian battles than in those with Darius. Their arms, with the exception of firearms, were the same as at present. The peculiar Indian bow, now only used in mountainous countries, which is drawn with the assistance of the feet, and shoots an arrow more than six feet long, is particularly described by Arrian, as are the long swords and iron spears, both of which are still occasionally in use. Their powerful bits, and great management of their horses, were remarkable even then.

The presents made by the Indian princes indicate wealth; and all the descriptions of the parts visited by the Greeks give the idea of a country teeming with population, and enjoying the highest degree of prosperity.

Apollodorus⁴⁷ states that there were, between the Hydasps and Hypanis (Hyphasis), 1,500 cities, none of which was less than Cos; which, with every allowance for exaggeration, supposes a most flourishing territory. Palibothra was eight miles long and one and a half broad, defended by a deep ditch and a high rampart, with 570 towers and 64 gates.

The numerous commercial cities and ports for foreign trade, which are mentioned at a later period (in the "Periplus"), attest the progress of the Indians in a department which more than any other shows the advanced state of a nation.

The police is spoken of as excellent. Megasthenes relates that in the camp of Sandracottus, which he estimates to have contained 400,000 men, the sums stolen daily did not amount to more than 200 drachms (about £3).

Justice seems to have been administered by the king and his assessors; and the few laws mentioned are in the spirit of those of Manu. On this subject, however, the Greeks are as ill informed as might have been expected. They all believe the laws to have been unwritten; some even maintain that the Indians were ignorant of letters, while others praise the beauty of their writing.⁴⁸

The revenue was derived from the land, the workmen, and the traders.⁴⁹ The land revenue is stated by Strabo to amount (as in Manu) to one fourth of the produce; but he declares, in plain terms, that "the whole land is the king's," and is farmed to the cultivators on the above terms.⁵⁰ He mentions, in another

⁴⁷ *Strabo, lib. xv.*

⁴⁸ *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 493, ed. 1587.*

⁴⁹ *Arrian's Indica, p. 11.*

⁵⁰ *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 484, ed. 1587.*

place, that the inhabitants of some villages cultivate the land in common, according to custom still much in use. The portion of the revenue paid in work by handicraftsmen (as stated by Manu, quoted elsewhere) is also noticed by Strabo. His account of the heads of markets (agoronomoi); their measurement of fields and distribution of water for irrigation; their administration of justice; and their being the channels for payment of the revenue; together with their general superintendence of the trades, roads, and all affairs within their limits, agrees exactly with the functions of the present patels, or heads of villages; and that of the heads of towns, though less distinct, bears a strong resemblance to the duties of similar officers at the present day.

Little is said about the religion of the Indians. Strabo mentions that they worship Jupiter Pluvius (which may mean Indra), the Ganges, and other local gods; that they wear no crowns at sacrifices; and that they stifle the victim instead of stabbing it, —a curious coincidence with some of the mystical sacrifices of the Brahmins, which are supposed to be of modern date.

Various other ancients are quoted by Colebrooke,⁵¹ to show that they likewise worshipped the sun.

Much is said by the Greeks of the Indian worship of Bacchus and Hercules; but obviously in consequence of their forcibly adapting the Hindu legends to their own, as they have done in so many other cases.⁵²

The learning of the Hindus was, of course, inaccessible to the Greeks. They had, however, a great impression of their wisdom; and some particulars of their philosophy, which have been handed down, are not unimportant. Megasthenes asserts that they agreed in many things with the Greeks; that they thought the world had a beginning and will have an end, is round, and is pervaded by the God who made and governs it; that all things rise from different origins, and the world from water; that, besides the four elements, there is one of which the heavens and stars are made; and that the world is the centre of the universe. He says they also agreed with the Greeks about the soul, and many other matters; and composed many tales (muthoi), like Plato, about the immortality of the soul, the judgment after death, and similar subjects.⁵³

⁵¹ *Asiatic Researches*, vol. ix. p. 298. [This practice of stifling the victim was a Vedic custom: cf. Weber, *Indische Stud.* ix. 223.—Colebrook.]

⁵² The mention of the worship of Hercules at Methora may possibly refer to that of Krishna at Muttra.

⁵³ Strabo, lib. xv. p. 494, ed. 1587.

It is evident, from these early accounts, that if the Brahmins learned their philosophy from the Greeks, it must have been before the time of Alexander; and Onesicritus, whose conversations with them on philosophy have been already mentioned, expressly says that they inquired whether the Greeks ever held similar discourses, and makes it manifest that they were entirely uninformed regarding the sciences and opinions of his countrymen.

From the silence of the Greeks respecting Indian architecture we may infer that the part of the country which they visited was as destitute of fine temples as it is now. Their account of Indian music is as unfavourable as would be given by a modern European; for although it is said that they were fond of singing and dancing, it is alleged, in another place, that they had no instruments but drums, cymbals, and castanets.

The other arts of life seem to have been in the same state as at present. The kinds of grain reaped at each of their two harvests were the same as now; sugar, cotton, spices, and perfumes were produced as at present; and the mode of forming the fields into small beds to retain the water used in irrigation is described as similar.⁵⁴ Chariots were drawn in war by horses, but on a march by oxen; they were sometimes drawn by camels (which are now seldom applied to draught but in the desert). Elephant chariots were also kept as a piece of great magnificence. I have only heard of two in the present age.

The modern mode of catching and training elephants, with all its ingenious contrivances, may be learned from Arrian⁵⁵ almost as exactly as from the account of the modern practice in the "Asiatic Researches."⁵⁶

The brilliancy of their dyes is remarked on, as well as their skill in manufactures and imitations of foreign objects.⁵⁷

The use of copper vessels for all purposes was as general as it is now; but brazen ones, which are now even more common, were avoided on account of their supposed brittleness. Royal roads are spoken of by Strabo⁵⁸ in one place, and milestones in another.⁵⁹

Strabo expatiates on the magnificence of the Indian festivals. Elephants, adorned with gold and silver, moved forth in proces-

⁵⁴ *Ibid. lib. xv. pp. 476, 477.*

⁵⁵ *Indica, chap. xiii.*

⁵⁶ *Vol. iii. p. 229.*

⁵⁷ *Strabo, lib. xv p. 493.*

⁵⁸ *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 474, ed. 1587.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid. lib. xv. p. 487.*

sion with chariots of four horses and carriages drawn by oxen; well-appointed troops marched in their allotted place; gilded vases, and basins of great size, were borne in state, with tables, thrones, goblets, and lavers, almost all set with emeralds, beryls, carbuncles, and other precious stones; garments of various colours, and embroidered with gold, added to the richness of the spectacle. Tame lions and panthers formed part of the show, to which singing birds, and others remarkable for their plumage, were also made to contribute, sitting on trees which were transported on large wagons, and increased the variety of the scene. This last custom survived in part, and perhaps still survives, in Bengal, where artificial trees and gardens, as they were called, not long ago formed part of the nuptial processions.⁶⁰ They are said to honour the memories of the dead, and to compose songs in their praise, but not to erect expensive tombs to them;⁶¹ a peculiarity which still prevails, notwithstanding the reverence paid to ancestors. The peculiar custom of building wooden houses near the rivers, which is noticed by Arrian,⁶² probably refers to the practice which still obtains on the Indus, where the floors are platforms raised twelve or fifteen feet from the ground, as well as on the Irawaddy, where almost all the houses of Rangoon seem to be similarly constructed.

They never gave or took money in marriage;⁶³ conforming, in that respect, both to the precepts of Manu and to the practice of modern times.⁶⁴

The women were chaste, and the practice of self-immolation by widows was already introduced, but perhaps only partially, as Aristobulus speaks of it as one of the extraordinary local peculiarities which he heard of at Taxila.⁶⁵ The practice of giving their daughters to the victor in prescribed trials of force and skill, which gives rise to several adventures in the Hindu heroic poems, is spoken of by Arrian⁶⁶ as usual in common life. Their kings are represented as surrounded by numbers of female slaves, who not only attend them in their retired apartments, as in Manu, but accompany them on hunting parties, and are guarded from view by jealous precautions for keeping the public at a distance,

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, lib. xv. p. 494.

⁶¹ *Arrian's Indica*, cap. x.

⁶² *Ibid.*, cap. x.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, cap. xvii.

⁶⁴ *Megasthenes alone contradicts this account, and says they bought their wives for a yoke of oxen.* (*Strabo*, cap. xv. p. 488).

⁶⁵ *Strabo*, lib. xv. p. 491, ed. 1587.

⁶⁶ *Indica*, cap. xvii.

like those well known among the Mahomedans, and them only, by the name of kuruk. The ceremonial of the kings, however, had not the servility since introduced by the Mussulmans. It was the custom of the Indians to pray for the king, but not to prostrate themselves before him like the Persians.⁶⁷

The dress of the Indians, as described by Arrian,⁶⁸ is precisely that composed of two sheets of cotton cloth, which is still worn by the people of Bengal, and by strict Brahmins everywhere. Earrings and ornamented slippers were also used, according to the fashion of the present day. Their clothes were generally white cotton, though often of a variety of bright colours and flowered patterns (chintz). They wore gold and jewels, and were very expensive in their dresses, though frugal in most other things.⁶⁹ Pearls and precious stones were in common use among them. The great had umbrellas carried over them, as now.

They dyed their beards, as they do now, with henna and indigo; and mistakes in their mixture or time of application seem then, as now, to have occasionally made their beards green, blue, or purple. At present no colours are ever purposely produced but black and sometimes red. They dined separately, according to their present unsocial practice, each man cooking his own dinner apart when he required it. They drank little fermented liquor, and what they did use was made from rice (arrack).

The appearance of the Indians is well described, and (what is surprising, considering the limited knowledge of the Macedonians) the distinction between the inhabitants of the north and south is always adverted to. The southern Indians are said to be black, and not unlike Ethiopians, except for the absence of flat noses and curly hair; the northern ones are fairer, and like Egyptians,⁷⁰—a resemblance which must strike every traveller from India on seeing the pictures in the tombs on the Nile.

The Indians are described as swarthy, but very tall, handsome, light, and active.⁷¹ Their bravery is always spoken of as characteristic; their superiority in war to other Asiatics is repeatedly asserted, and appears in more ways than one.⁷² They

⁶⁷ *It is remarkable that in the Hindu dramas there is not a trace of servility in the behaviour of other characters to the king. Even now, Hindu courts that have had little communication with Mussulmans are comparatively unassuming in their etiquette.*

⁶⁸ *Indica, cap. xvi.*

⁶⁹ *Strabo, lib. xv. pp. 481, 488.*

⁷⁰ *Arrian, Indica, cap. vi. : Strabo, lib. xv. p. 475, ed. 1587.*

⁷¹ *Arrian, Indica, cap. xvii.*

⁷² *Arrian, Exped. Alexand., lib. v. cap. iv.*

are said to be sober, moderate, peaceable; good soldiers; good farmers;⁷³ remarkable for simplicity and integrity; so reasonable as never to have recourse to a lawsuit; and so honest as neither to require locks to their doors nor writings to bind their agreements.⁷⁴ Above all, it is said that no Indian was ever known to tell an untruth.⁷⁵

We know, from the ancient writings of the Hindus themselves, that the alleged proofs of their confidence in each other are erroneous. The account of their veracity may safely be regarded as equally incorrect; but the statement is still of great importance, since it shows what were the qualities of the Indians that made most impression on the Macedonians, and proves that their character must, since then, have undergone a total change. Strangers are now struck with the litigiousness and falsehood of the Indians; and, when they are incorrect in their accounts, it is always by exaggerating those defects.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, lib. v. cap. xxv.

⁷⁴ *Strabo*, lib. xv. p. 488, ed. 1587.

⁷⁵ *Arrian*, *Indica*, cap. xii.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREEK KINGDOM OF BACTRIA

By M. ELPHINSTONE

Accounts of the Ancients—B.C. 312—B.C. 250

The Greek kingdom of Bactria, as formerly known to us, had so little influence on India, that it would scarcely have deserved mention in the history of that country.

Late discoveries have shown a more permanent connexion between it and India, and may throw light on relations as yet but little understood. But these discoveries still require the examination of antiquarians; and a slight sketch of the results hitherto ascertained will be sufficient in this place.

When Alexander retired from India, he left a detachment from his army in Bactria.

After the first contest for the partition of his empire, that province fell to the lot of Seleucus, king of Syria. He marched in person to reduce the local governors into obedience, and afterwards went on to India, and made his treaty with Sandracottus.¹ Bactria remained subject to his descendants, until their own civil wars and the impending revolt of the Parthians induced the governor of the province to assert his independence. Theodotus was the first king. He was succeeded by his son of the same name, who was deposed by Euthydemus, a native of Magnesia, in Asia Minor. By this time, the Seleucidæ had consolidated their power; and Antiochus the Great came with a large army to restore order in the eastern part of his dominions. He defeated Euthydemus, but admitted him to terms; and confirmed him in possession of the throne he had usurped. It does not seem probable that Euthydemus carried his arms to the south of the eastern Caucasus; but his son, Demetrius, obtained possession of Arachosia and a large portion of Persia. He also made conquests in India, and was in possession, not only of Lower Sind, but of the coast of India farther to the east. He seems, however, to have been excluded from Bactria, of which Eucratidas remained master. After the death of Euthydemus, Demetrius made an unsuccessful attempt to dispossess his rival; and,

¹ The History of India, Elphinstone, 9th ed., p. 151.

in the end, lost all his Indian conquests, which were seized by Eucratidas.

In the time of Eucratidas the Bactrian power was at its height. In the midst of his greatness he was assassinated by his own son, Eucratidas II.;² and, during the reign of this prince, some of his western dominions were seized on by the Parthians, and Bactria itself by the Scythians;³ and nothing remained in his possession but the country on the south of the eastern Caucasus. The period of the reigns of Menander and Apollodotus, and the relation in which they stood to the Eucratidæ, cannot be made out from the ancients. Menander made conquests in the north west of India, and carried the Greek arms farther in that direction than any other monarch of the nation. The position of his conquests is shown in a passage of Strabo, that likewise contains all we know of the extent of the Bactrian kingdom. According to an ancient author there quoted, the Bactrians possessed the most conspicuous part of Ariana, and conquered more nations in India than even Alexander. In this last achievement the principal actor was Menander, who crossed the Hypanis towards the east, and went on as far as the Isamus. Between him and Demetrius, the son of Euthydemus (continues the same author), the Bactrians occupied not only Pattalene, but that part of the other coast which is called the kingdom of Tessariostus and the kingdom of Sigertes. The Hypanis mentioned in the beginning of the passage referred to is admitted to mean the Hyphasis; but the Isamus is thought by some to be the Jumna river, by others the Himalaya mountains (sometimes called Imaus), and by others, again, a small river called Isa, which runs into the Ganges on the western side. Whichever is correct, the territory to the east of the Panjab must have been a narrow strip. No mention is made of acquisitions towards the south; and if any had been made in that direction as far as Delhi, or even Hastinapur, they would not have entirely escaped the notice even of Hindu authors. The south-western conquests extended to the Delta of the Indus (Pattalene being the country about Tatta); but whether the kingdom of Sigertes, on the other coast, was Cach or the peninsula of Guzerat we have no means of conjecturing. The author of the "Periplus" says that coins of Menander and Apollodotus were met with in his time at Baroch, which in

² [The name of the parricide is uncertain; some suppose that he is the Heliocles of the coins. On one of the coins of Eucratidas we find Heliocles' head without a fillet on the reverse; which seems to indicate that he was associated in the government.—Cowell.]

³ About 130 B.C. (Clinton's *Fasti*); 125 B.C. (De Guignes).

the state of circulation of those days makes it probable that some of their territories were not very distant. On the west, "the most conspicuous part of Ariana," would certainly be Khorasan; but they had probably lost some portion of that province before the Indian conquests attained the utmost limit.⁴

The above is the information we derive from ancient authors. It has been confirmed and greatly augmented by recent discoveries from coins. These increase the number of Greek kings from the eight above mentioned to eighteen; and disclose new dynasties of other nations who succeeded each other on the extinction of the Greek monarchy.

The subject first attracted notice in consequence of some coins obtained by Colonel Tod, and an interesting paper which he published regarding them in the first volume of the "Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society." It excited great attention on the Continent, and was zealously followed up in India by Professor Wilson and Prinsep.

Professor Wilson has published an account of the coins of the Greek kings, and arranged them as far as our present knowledge permits; but as they bear no dates either of time or place the arrangement is necessarily incomplete.⁵ The coins of the kings already mentioned, down to Eucratidas I., are found on the north of the eastern Caucasus. The inscriptions, the figures, the reverses, and the workmanship are pure Greek. From Eucratidas II., no coins are found on the northern side of the mountains; and those found on the southern side assume a new form. They are often square, a shape of which there is no example in any other Grecian coinage, either European or Asiatic: they frequently bear two inscriptions, one in Greek and another in a barbaric character; and, from the reign of Menander, they have occasionally an elephant or a bull with a hump; both animals peculiar to India, and indicative of an Indian dominion.

The barbaric character has been but imperfectly deciphered, and has given rise to a good deal of discussion. It is certainly . . .

⁴ *The information to be found in ancient authors is collected in Bayer's Bactria. There is a clear, concise sketch of Bactrian history from the same source in Clinton's Fasti Hellenici, vol. iii. p. 315, note x. [For Hindu notices, see Dr. Goldstucker's Panini, p. 230, and Dr. Kern's Preface to Varahamihira, pp. 35—39.—Cowell.]*

⁵ *[In 1841 Professor Wilson published his Ariana Antiqua, which contains a full account of the Bactrian coins. See also H. T. Prinsep's Note on Recent Discoveries in Afghanistan.—Cowell.]*

written from right to left ; a mode, as far as we know, peculiar to the languages of the Arab family : it may be assumed that it represents the language of the country, which it is natural to suppose would be Persian ; and these circumstances suggest Pehlevi as the language. This opinion, accordingly, has been maintained by some of those who have written on the subject ; but a close examination by Professor Wilson leads him to doubt the conclusion, though he has no theory of his own to support. Others, thinking that they discover words of Sanscrit origin in the inscriptions, believe the language to be Zend, or else some of the dialects of India.⁶

Of this series of coins the first that attract notice are those of Menander. As they exhibit the title of *Soter*, which was adopted by the two Eucratidæ, and as the devices on the reverses are the same as on the coin of these princes, it is a legitimate deduction that the king who struck them belonged to the same dynasty. The same argument extends to the coins of Apollodotus, who was perhaps the son of Menander. Two more kings, Diomedes and Hermæus, have also the title of *Soter*, and may be presumed to belong to the same dynasty. The inferior execution of the coins of Hermæus points him out as the latest of the series ; and it is his coins, also, that furnish the model for another description which it may be inferred came immediately after his time.

These are of much ruder workmanship, and the inscriptions are an almost illegible Greek ; the names, also, are barbarous and uncouth,—Kadphises, Kanerkes, etc. These are conjectured, on very probable grounds, to be Scythians, and to have sub-

⁶ [Besides the immense number of bilingual coins, there are also some inscriptions in a similar character on vases, etc., found in topes. These latter have been hitherto but imperfectly deciphered, but the earlier series of coins presents few difficulties, and the value of the letters has been clearly determined. "The language of the coins during the existence of the Greek princes and their immediate successors was a vernacular dialect of Sanskrit, to all the varieties of which the appellation Prakrit is applicable. With the Indo-Scythian kings, words borrowed from Turk or other Asiatic dialects may possibly have been intermixed with those of Indian currency ; and we have in the inscriptions on the vases possibly a different dialect, sparingly intermingled with words of Sanskrit origin." (*Ariana Ant.*, p. 200).—Cowell.]

jected the southern kingdom of the Bactrian Greeks about the beginning of the Christian era.⁷

Other coins are also found, resembling the last series, but perhaps connected with the Parthians rather than the Scythians.

To complete the chronology, there are coins not yet examined, but obviously belonging to the Sassanians, who were in possession of Persia at the time of the Mahometan invasion.

There is another class of coins, resembling, in many respects, those of the Eucratidæ, and probably belonging to a series collateral with that of the *Soters*, but extending beyond the duration of that dynasty. Many of the names they bear are accompanied by epithets derived from Nike (victory); from which, and other points of resemblance, they are regarded as belonging to one dynasty.

There is one more class, consisting of only two princes, Agathocles and Pantaleon. They are thought to be the latest of all the Greek coins, but are chiefly remarkable because they alone have their second inscriptions in the ancient character found on the caves and columns of India, and not in the one written from right to left.

Some conclusions may be drawn from the situations in which the coins have been discovered. Those of Menander are numerous in the country about Kabul, and also at Peshawer. One has been found as far east as Mattra on the Jumna. We may perhaps infer that his capital was situated in the tract first mentioned, and this would give ground for conjecturing the residence of the *Soter* dynasty. I do not know that there is any clue to that of the *Nike* kings. Professor Wilson conjectures Agathocles and Pantaleon to have reigned in the mountains about Chitral; which, being the country of the Paropamisian Indians, may perhaps afford some explanation of the Indian character on their coins. The situation in which the Scythian coins are found is itself very remarkable; and there are other circumstances which hold out a prospect of their throwing great light on Indian history. All the former coins, with the exception of some of those of Hermaeus, have been purchased in the bazars, or picked up on or near the surface

⁷ [The coins of the Greek princes are, with two exceptions, of silver or copper; those of the Indo-Scythian princes are exclusively of copper and gold. Gen. Cunningham has identified Kanerki with the Kanishka of Cashmirian history and the Kia-ni-sse-kia of the Chinese traveller, in whose reign the third Buddhist council is said to have been held.—Cowell.]

of the earth on the sites of old cities. But the Scythian coins are found in great numbers in a succession of monuments which are scattered over a tract extending eastward from the neighbourhood of Kabul through the whole basin of the Kabul river, and across the northern part of the Panjab. These huge structures are the sort of solid cupola so common among the votaries of Buddha; and, like the rest, contain each a relic of some holy person. No Greek coins are ever found in them, except those of Hermæus; but there are other coins, a few from remote countries, and the earliest yet discovered is one belonging to the second triumvirate. This coin must have been struck as late as the forty-third year before Christ; but might easily have found its way to the frontiers of India before the final overthrow of the Greek kingdom, which all agree to have taken place about the beginning of the Christian era.

These facts corroborate the conjectures of De Guignes, drawn from Chinese annals, that the Greeks were driven out of Bactria, by the Tartar tribe of Su from the north of Transoxiana, 126 years before Christ; and that their Indian kingdom was subverted about twenty-six years before Christ by the Yue-chi,⁸ who came from Persia, and spread themselves along a large portion of the course of the Indus.

The Su have left no coins; but it is natural to suppose that the Yue-chi, who came from Persia, would follow the example set by the Parthians, and would imitate the coinage of their Greek predecessors. This practice of the Indo-Scythians (whoever they were) was taken up by some dynasty of the Hindus; for coins of the latter nation have been found bearing nearly the same relation to those of the Indo-Scythians that *theirs* did to the coins of the Greeks.

We must not suppose that the Bactrian kingdom was composed of a great body of Greek colonists, such as existed in the west of Asia, or in the south of Italy. A very large proportion of Alexander's army latterly was composed of barbarians, disciplined and undisciplined. These would not be anxious to accompany him on his retreat; and, on the other hand, we know

⁸ *De Guignes's account of the first conquest is, that the Su came from Ferghana, on the Jaxartes, and conquered a civilized nation, whose coin bore a man on one side, and horsemen on the other. The coins of the Eccratidæ have the king's head on one side, and Castor and Pollux, mounted, on the other. [These Chinese dates are somewhat uncertain; see Ariana Ant. pp. 300—306. Strabo says that the Greeks in Bactria were overthrown by the Asii, Pasiani, Tokhari, and Sakarauli.—Cowell.]*

that he was constrained to retrace his steps by the impatience of the Greeks and Macedonians to return to their own country.

From this we may conclude that a small part of those left behind were of the latter nations; and, as Alexander encouraged his soldiers to take Persian wives (a course in itself indispensable to the settlers, from the absence of Greek women), it is evident that the second generation of Bactrians must have been much more Persian than Greek. Fresh importations of Greek adventurers would take place during the ascendancy of the Seleucidæ; but, after the establishment of the Parthian power, all communication must necessarily have been cut off; which explains the total silence of Greek authors regarding the later days of the Bactrian kingdom; the degeneracy of the latter coinage is consistent with these facts, which also remove the difficulty of accounting for the disappearance of the Greeks after the overthrow of their southern kingdom.

CHAPTER V

THE REVENUE SYSTEM

By M. ELPHINSTONE

(A) Traces of the lord of a thousand villages are found in different parts of the country, where particular families retain the name and part of the emoluments of their stations, but seldom or never exercise any of the powers.¹

The next division is still universally recognized throughout India under the name of *pergannah*, although in many places the officers employed in it are only known by their enjoyment of hereditary lands or fees; or, at most, by their being the depositaries of all registers and records connected with land. These districts are no longer uniformly composed of one hundred villages, if they ever were so in practice; but, for the most part, are rather under that number, although in rare cases they depart from it very widely both in deficiency and excess.

The duties of a chief of a *pergannah*, even in pure Hindu times, were probably confined to the management of the police and revenue. He had under him an accountant or registrar, whose office, as well as his own, was hereditary, and who has retained his functions more extensively than his principal.²

Next below the *pergannah* is a division now only subsisting in name, and corresponding to Manu's lordship of ten or twenty towns;³ and the chain ends in individual villages.⁴

¹ These are called *sirdesmukhs* in the *Deckan*, in which and other southern parts of India the territorial division of Menu is most entire. Their districts are called *sircars* or *prants*, and these are constantly recognized, even when the office is quite extinct. Their hereditary registrar, also, is still to be found under the name of *sir despandi*.

² The head *pergannah* officer was called *desmukh* or *desai* in the *Deckan*, and the registrar, *despandi*. In the north of India they are called *choudri* and *canongo*.

³ Called *naikwari*, *tarref*, etc., etc.

⁴ For the accounts of these divisions and officers, see Malcolm's *Malwa* (vol. ii. p. 4); Stirling's *Orissa* (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. xv. p. 226); Report from the Commissioner in the *Deckan* and its enclosures (*Selections*, vol. iv. p. 161).

(B) Called patel in the Deckan and the west and centre of Hindostan; mandel in Bengal; and mokaddam in many other places, especially where there are or have lately been hereditary village landholders.

(C) Patwari in Hindostan; culcarni and carnam in the Deckan and south of India; tallati in Guzerat.

(D) Pasban gorayet, peik, douraha, etc., in Hindostan; mhar in the Deckan; tillari in the south of India; paggi in Guzerat.

(E) Village landholders are distinctly recognized throughout the whole of the Bengal presidency, except in Bengal proper, and perhaps Rohilcand.⁵ They appear to subsist in part of Rajputana; and perhaps did so, at no remote period, over the whole of it.⁶ They are very numerous in Guzerat, include more than half the cultivators of the Marhatta country, and a very large portion of those of the Tamil country. There is good reason to think that they were once general in those countries where they are now only partially in existence, and perhaps in others where they are not now to be found. They are almost extinct in the country south of the Nerbadda, except in the parts just mentioned. In all the Madras presidency north of Madras itself; in the Nizam's country, and most of that of Nagpur; in great part of Khandesh and the east of the Marhatta country, there is no class resembling them. This tract comprehends the greater part of the old divisions of Telingana, Orissa, and Canara; but does not so closely coincide with their boundaries, as to give much reason for ascribing the absence of village landholders to any peculiarity in the ancient system of those countries. In Malwa, though so close to countries where the village landholders are common, they do not seem now to be known. They are not mentioned in Sir John Malcolm's "Central India."

(F) In Hindustan they are most commonly called village zemindars or biswadars; in Behar, maliks; in Guzerat, patels; and in the Deckan and south of India, mirassis or mirasdars.

"The right of property in the land is unequivocally recognized in the present agricultural inhabitants by descent, purchase, or gift."⁷

The right of the village landholders, to the extent stated in the text, is repeatedly alluded to in the published records of

⁵ *Sir E. Colebrook's Minute (Selections, vol. iii. p. 165).*

⁶ *Col. Tod, vol. i. p. 495, and vol. ii. p. 540.*

⁷ *Fortescue, Selections, viii. p. 403.*

the Bengal government relating to the western provinces. Sir C. Metcalfe, though he contests the opinion that the right of property is full and absolute as in England, has no doubt about the persons in whom that right is vested. "The only proprietors, generally speaking, are the village zemindars or biswadars. The pretensions of all others are *prima facie* doubtful."⁸ For portions of the territory under the Madras presidency see the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue,⁹ and Ellis.¹⁰ Sir T. Munro,¹¹ though he considers the advantages of mirasdars to have been greatly exaggerated and their land to be of little value, admits it to be saleable.¹² For the Marhatta country see Chaplin and the Reports of the collectors.¹³ Captain Robertson, one of the collectors, among other deeds of sale, gives one from some private villagers transferring their mirassi right to the Peshwa himself. He also gives a grant from a village community conferring the lands of an extinct family on the same prince for a sum of money, and guaranteeing him against the claims of the former proprietors. A very complete account of all the different tenures in the Marhatta country, as well as of the district and village officers, with illustrations from personal inquiries, is given by Lieutenant-Colonel Sykes in the "Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society."¹⁴

Care must be taken to distinguish miras in the sense now adverted to from lands held on other tenures; for the word means *hereditary* property, and is, therefore, applied to rights of all descriptions which come under that denomination.

(G) Fortescue ("Selections," vol. iii. pp. 403, 405, 408); Captain Robertson (*Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 153); Madras Board of Revenue ("Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1832," vol. iii. p. 393); Governor of Bombay's Minute (*Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 637).

(G) In making a partition of the land the landholders are taken by families, as has been explained of the village govern-

⁸ Minute of Sir C. Metcalfe, in the Report of the Select Committee of August, 1832, iii. p. 335.

⁹ Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1832, iii. p. 392.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

¹¹ Minute of December 31, 1824.

¹² Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1832, p. 457.

¹³ Selections, vol. iv. p. 474.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 205, and vol. iii. p. 350.

ment; but in the case of land the principal family divisions are subdivided, and the subdivisions divided again according to the Hindu mode of dealing with inheritances.¹⁵ The lands of the village and other profits of the community are likewise formed into shares, sometimes corresponding exactly to the divisions, subdivisions, etc., of the families; but more frequently reduced to small fractions, a proportionate number of which is assigned to each division, etc., so as ultimately to be distributed in due proportion to each individual.¹⁶

The public burdens are portioned exactly in the same manner, so that each division, subdivision, and individual knows its quota; each, therefore, might manage its own agricultural and pecuniary affairs independently of the rest, and such is not unfrequently the case.

In the Marhatta country, for instance, although there are divisions with a joint responsibility among the members, yet they have no longer heads; each individual manages his own concerns, and the headman of the village does all the rest.

I do not advert to changes made in other parts of India which are departures from the Hindu practice.

(H) The following are the rights possessed in the immediate stages between a fixed rent and an honorary acknowledgment. The landholders are entitled to a deduction from the gross produce of the fields before dividing it with the government, and to fees on all the produce raised by persons not of their own class. This is called *tundumarum* or *swamibhogam* (owner's share) in the Tamil country; and *malikana* or *zemindari rasum*

¹⁵ "To explain the divisions of a village and inheritable shares in it, suppose the ancient first proprietor or incumbent to have left, on his death, four sons; each would inherit equally, and four panes would thus be erected: on the demise of each of those persons with four sons also each would be entitled to a quarter of his father's pane, which would give rise to four *tholas* in each pane, and so on." (Fortescue, *Selections*, vol. iii. p. 405). About Delhi, the great division seems to be called *pane*, as above; but the commonest name in Hindostan is *patti*, subdivided into *thocks*, and they again into *bheris*. There are many other names, and even these vary in the application; a great division being in some places called a *thock*, and a sub-division a *patti*. In Guzerat the great divisions are called *bagh*, and the subdivisions *patti*; another, and the commonest subdivision there, is into *annas*, again subdivided into *chawils*. In the Deckan the great divisions are called *jattas*, and there are no subdivisions.

¹⁶ See table by Sir Edward Colebrooke, *Selections*, vol. iii. p. 166.

in Hindostan. In the latter country it usually forms part of the consolidated payment of 10 per cent. to the zemindars, which seems intended as a compensation for all general demands; but not interfering with the rent of a landholder's lands where any such could be obtained. In some places,¹⁷ they have also fees from the non-agricultural inhabitants; and, as they are everywhere proprietors of the site of the village, they can levy rent in money or service from any person who lives within their bounds.

Where they have lost some of those rights by the encroachments of the government, they frequently have some consideration shown them in assessing their payment to the state, so as in some cases to admit of their getting rent for their land. In some places they are left their fees;¹⁸ and, where they are at the lowest, they have an exemption from certain taxes which are paid by all the rest of the inhabitants. The rights and immunities of the village landholders, as such, must not be confounded with those applied to mokaddams, and other officers for the performance of certain duties. Though the same persons may hold both, they are in their nature quite distinct; one being a proprietary right arising from an interest in the soil, and the other a mere remuneration for service, transferable along with the service from one person to another, at the pleasure of the employer.

(I) The Arabic word ryot (pronounced reit) means a subject, and is so employed in all Mahometan countries; but in some of them it is also used in a more restricted sense. In India its secondary senses are,—1. A person paying revenue. 2. A cultivator in general. 3. A tenant as explained in the text. In reference to the person of whom they hold their lands, ryots are called his assamis.

(K) This class is called in the territory under Bengal khudkasht ryots, which name (as “khud” means “own,” and “kashtan” to “cultivate”) has been considered a proof that they are proprietors of the land. Ram Mohan Roy, however, (an unexceptionable authority), explains it to mean “cultivators of

¹⁷ *In Guzerat and in Hindostan. Also, see an account of the village of Burleh, by Cavendish (Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1832, iii. p. 246).*

¹⁸ *In part of Tamil, and in Hindostan, when not superseded by the allowance of 10 per cent. (See Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1832, iii. p. 247).*

the lands of their own village,"¹⁹ which seems the correct interpretation, as the term is always used in contradistinction to paikasht, of cultivators of another village.

(L) It is in the Tamil country and in Guzerat that their rights seem best established.

In the Tamil country they have an hereditary right of occupancy, subject to the payment of the demand of government and of the usual fees to the village landholder, which are fixed, and sometimes at no more than a peppercorn; but the tenant cannot sell, give away, or mortgage his rights, although in the circumstances described they must be nearly as valuable as those of the landholder himself.²⁰ In Guzerat their tenure is nearly similar, except that it is clearly understood that their rent is to be raised in proportion to any increase to the government demand on the village landholder; and it is probable that this understanding prevails in the Tamil country also, though not mentioned in the printed reports. In Hindostan there appears to be a feeling that they are entitled to hereditary occupancy, and that their rents ought not to be raised above those usual in the neighbourhood; but the following summary will show how imperfect this right is thought to be.

In 1818 a call was made by the Bengal government on the collectors of all its provinces not under the permanent settlement for information respecting the rights of the permanent ryots. Of fourteen collectors, eleven considered the landholder to be entitled to raise his rent at pleasure, and to oust his tenant whenever he could get better terms elsewhere; two collectors (those of Etawa and Seharunpur) seem to have thought that the landlord's rent should not be raised unless there was an increase in the demand of government; the collector of Bundelcand alone declared the khudkasht ryot's right to be as good as his of whom he holds. The members of the Revenue Commission, in forwarding these reports, gave their opinion that landholders conceive themselves to possess the power of ousting their tenants, although from the demand for ryots it is not frequently exercised.

The government at that time doubted the correctness of these opinions, and called for further information; which,

¹⁹ *Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons*, October 11, 1831, p. 716.

²⁰ *Ellis, Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons*, August 10, 1832, vol. iii. p. 377; *Board of Revenue, Minute of January 5, 1818*, p. 421.

although it threw much light on the question, did not materially alter the above conclusion.

Fortescue, reporting on Delhi (where the rights of the permanent tenant seem better preserved than in any place under Bengal except Bundelcand), says that the ancient and hereditary occupants cannot be dispossessed as "long as they discharged their portion of the public assessment."

The minute reports on various villages in different collectorships, abstracted by Holt Mackenzie,²¹ do not lead to a belief that the rents cannot be raised. Colebrooke states in a minute, which seems to have been written in 1812,²² "that no rule of adjustment could be described (query, discovered?) after the most patient inquiry by a very intelligent public officer; and that the proceedings of the courts of justice in numerous other cases led to the same conclusion respecting the relative situation of ryots and zemindars."

Ross, a judge of the Chief Court, likewise, in a very judicious minute of 22nd March, 1827,²³ states that a fixed rate never was claimed by mere ryots, whether resident or non-resident, in the upper provinces; inquires when such a fixed rent was in force; and whether it was intended to remain fixed, however the value of the land might alter? and concludes as follows: "As to the custom of the country, it has always been opposed to such a privilege, it being notorious that the zemindars and other superior landholders have at all times been in the practice of extorting from their ryots as much as the latter can afford to pay."

(M) Called in Hindostan, paikasht; in Guzerat, ganwatti (leaseholder); in the Marhatta country, upri; and under Madras, paikari and paracudi.

(N) They are called ashraf (well-born) in Hindostan, and pander pesha in some parts of the Deckan.

(O) There is an acknowledged restriction on all permanent tenants, which prevents their cultivating any land within the village that does not belong to the landlord of whom they rent their fixed portion and their house; but not only permanent tenants, but village landholders themselves, occasionally hold land as temporary tenants in *other* villages. In some parts of India the government levies a tax on the permanent tenants of

²¹ *Report of Select Committee of House of Commons, 1832, vol. iii. p. 243.*

²² *See vol. i. p. 262.*

²³ *Appendix to Report of 1832, p. 125.*

land paying revenue who farm other lands from persons exempt from payment; and in some, the government officer endeavours to prevent their withdrawing from their assessed lands in any circumstances. This last, however, is reckoned mere violence and oppression.

(P) This system may be illustrated by the example of the petty state of Cach, which, being of recent formation, retains its original form unimpaired. "The whole revenue of this territory is under fifty lacs of cories (about sixteen lacs of rupees), and of this less than thirty lacs of cories belongs to the Rao; the country which yields the remaining twenty lacs being assigned to the collateral branches of his highness's family, each of whom received a certain appanage on the death of the Rao, from whom it is immediately descended.

"The family of these chiefs is derived at a recent period from Tatta in Sind, and they all sprang from a common ancestor, Humeerjee, whose son, Rao Khengar, acquired the sovereignty of Cutch before the middle of the sixteenth century of our era.

"The number of these chiefs is at present about 200, and the whole number of their tribe in Cutch is guessed at 10,000 or 12,000 persons. This tribe is called Jhareja. It is a branch of the Rajputs. The Rao's ordinary jurisdiction is confined to his own demesne, each Jhareja chief exercising unlimited authority within his lands. The Rao can call on the Jharejas to serve him in war; but must furnish them with pay at a fixed rate while they are with his army. He is the guardian of the public peace, and as such chastises all robbers and other general enemies. It would seem that he ought likewise to repress private war, and to decide all disputes between chiefs; but this prerogative, though constantly exerted, is not admitted without dispute. Each chief has a similar body of kinsmen, who possess shares of the original appanage of the family, and stand in the same relation of nominal dependence to him that he bears to the Rao. These kinsmen form what is called the bhyaud or brotherhood of the chiefs, and the chiefs themselves compose the bhyaud of the Rao."²⁴

The same practice, with some modifications, prevails through the whole of the Rajput country.

The territories allotted to feudatories in Mewar (the first in rank of these states) was at one time more than three-

²⁴ *Minute on Cach, by the Governor of Bombay, dated January 26th, 1821.*

fourths of the whole,²⁵ and was increased by the improvidence of a more recent prince.

(Q) It must have been some check on the spirit of independence, that until within less than two centuries of the present time it was usual for all the chiefs, in Mewar at least, periodically to interchange their lands; a practice which must have tended to prevent their strengthening themselves in their possessions, either by forming connexions or erecting fortifications.²⁶

The rapid increase of these appanages appears to have suggested to the governments the necessity of putting a limit to their encroachments on the remaining demesne. In Marwar, a few generations after the conquest, so little land was left for partition that some of the raja's sons were obliged to look to foreign conquest for an establishment;²⁷ and in Mewar one set of descendants of early ranas seem to have been superseded, and probably in part dispossessed, by a more recent progeny.²⁸

(R) The following remarks apply to both descriptions of military jagirs.

Lands held for military service are subject to reliefs in the event of hereditary succession, and to still heavier fines when the heir is adoptive. They are subject to occasional contributions in cases of emergency. They cannot be sold or mortgaged for a longer period than that for which the assignment is made. Subinfeudations are uncommon except among the Rajputs, where they are universal.

There was no limitation of service, and no extra payments for service, in the original scheme of these grants.

Pecuniary payments at fixed rates in lieu of service, or rather on failure of service when called on, were common among the Mahrattas; and arbitrary fines were levied on similar occasions by the Rajputs.

²⁵ *Colonel Tod's Rajasthan, vol. i. p. 141.*

²⁶ *Ibid. vol. i. p. 164, and note on 165.*

²⁷ *Ibid. vol. ii. p. 20.*

²⁸ *Ibid. vol. i. p. 186.*

CHAPTER VI

THE VEDAS AND THE VAIDIK LITERATURE

By E. B. COWELL

THE Vedas are usually considered to be four; but of these the fourth, or Atharva, is easily distinguished from the rest, as of later origin, not merely by the tradition of the Hindus themselves, but also by internal evidence, one of the principal proofs being found in the fact that whereas the Rig Veda hymns continually refer to legendary characters of an earlier age, the *seers* or authors of these very hymns appear themselves to be the objects of this retrospective reverence in the Atharva.¹ In the same way a careful analysis of the remaining three discloses a somewhat similar relation between the Rig Veda on the one hand and the Yajur and Sama Vedas on the other. The Rig consists entirely of hymns, but in the other two these hymns are found continually quoted, as parts of a complicated liturgical ceremonial; in fact, the Yajur² and Sama³ presuppose the Rig as much as Manu's Institutes presuppose the entire Vaidik literature.

Beside the *Mantra* portion, consisting properly of hymns, each Veda has another portion called *Brahmana*, which contains a mass of legends and traditional explanations and glosses which were required to illustrate and enforce the various ceremonies

¹ Dr. Roth. *Zur Litt. und Geschichte des Weda*.

² There are two recensions of the Yajur Veda, the older one, called the "black," from its containing the hymns and liturgical portions mixed, and the later, called the "white," where the two are separated, the hymns being ranged together in a *Sanhita*, and the rubrics and explanations forming the *Satapatha Brahmana*. The *Brahmana* of the Black Yajur or *Taittiriya Veda*, is only a continuation of the *Sanhita*—there is no real difference between the two; while in the *White Yajur* they are quite different works. Hindu tradition points to *Yajnavalkya* as the "seer" of the *White Yajur Veda*, i.e., the sage to whom it was revealed. The *Black Yajur* is especially read in the *Telegu* country.

³ A very large portion of the contents of the *Sama* hymns are mere quotations from various hymns of the *Rig Veda*, arranged in a different order, and adapted for chanting.

and sacrifices. This portion is considered by Hindus as an equally eternal and essential part of the Veda with the Mantra portion; both were "heard" by the fortunate sages to whom they were revealed, and who taught them to their disciples; but it is easy to see, by the continual references in the Brahmanas to the hymns and the frequent bare hints and allusions to their words and phrases, that the Mantras of the Rig Veda must have existed in an accepted arrangement before any one of the Brahmanas could have been composed. The same remark applies with still greater force to the so-called third portion of the Veda, the Upanishads. We are thus left to the Mantra portion of the Rig Veda as our earliest authority for the social and religious institutions of the Hindus.

The Mantra portion of the Rig Veda consists of 1,017 hymns (beside eleven spurious ones called *valakhilyas*). These are divided into eight Ashtakas or ten Mandalas, the latter being the preferable division, as it arranges the hymns of the different families together. There is no doubt a difference in age between the various hymns which are now united in their present form as the Sanhita of the Rig Veda; but we have no data to determine their relative antiquity, and purely subjective criticism, apart from solid data, has so often failed in other instances, that we can trust but little to any of its inferences in such a recently opened field of research as Sanskrit literature.⁴ The still unsettled controversies about the Homeric poems may well warn us of being too confident in our judgments regarding the yet earlier hymns of the Rig Veda, so far removed as these latter are from all modern sentiment and sympathy.

It is important to remember that the Yajur and Sama Vedas are liturgical,—they are expressly arranged so as to contain the hymns and invocations respectively of the Adhwaryu and Udgatri priests, the former of whom had to perform the more servile functions in the sacrifice, and might only mutter their invocations, while the latter chanted as a kind of chorus. Besides these priests were the Hotris, whose duty was to recite certain hymns in a loud voice, and they were required to know the whole Rig Veda, and therefore had not, as the others, a special

⁴ *We are too apt to forget that the study of Sanskrit is only coeval with this century. Not a fourth part of the Vaidik literature is as yet in print, and very little of it has been translated into English. The present year (1866) is only the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of that work by Professor Bopp which raised the study of comparative philology into a science.*

collection of their own hymns. The Rig Veda is, in fact, the Sanhita or collection for the Hotris.⁵

When we examine these hymns of the Rig Veda, we at once find that they represent an early stage of the worship of the great powers of Nature personified; and as such they are deeply interesting for the history of the human mind, belonging as they do to a much older phase than the poems of Homer or Hesiod. Their religion can in no sense be called monotheistic; they consist of hymns addressed to different deities, more especially to Indra and Agni, with the subordinate deities, the Maruts, or the winds, and the Adityas, who in later times were the various manifestations of the sun, but in the Veda wear a very obscure character.

In a few places we find more mystical allusions, identifying all as ultimately one; but this is by no means the general tone. Most of the hymns express the same partiality to their special deity and the same tendency to magnify his glory and power over the others which we find in other systems of polytheism. In the same way, though some of the hymns express moral ideas and spiritual hopes and desires, and occasionally rise to a high religious tone, the general strain is purely earthly—the only evils which are usually deprecated are sickness and outward enemies, and the only blessings sought are children and cattle. To compare them with the Psalms is, even from a purely literary point of view, impossible.

The poetry of the Rig Veda is remarkably deficient in that simplicity and natural pathos or sublimity which we usually look for in the songs of an early period of civilization. The language and style of most of the hymns are singularly artificial; and indeed it has been made a question whether some of them were even meant to be intelligible to their first audience without an oral explanation of the obscure constructions and startling ellipses with which they abound. Occasionally we meet with fine outbursts of poetry, especially in the hymns addressed to the dawn, but these are never long sustained; and as a rule we find few grand similes or metaphors. The peculiar characteristics of the later Hindu poetry are its intense love and appreciation of all the varieties of natural scenery, and its delicate delineation of human character; but these are almost entirely wanting in the Rig Veda.

⁵ *Beside these three classes of priests, there was a fourth, called the Brahmans, whose duty was to follow the whole sacrifice in their mind, and to remedy any mistakes which might arise during its performance.*

But though it cannot claim a high place among the relics of the poetical genius of early times, the Rig Veda possesses an undying interest as the oldest monument of Gentile thought; and we can undoubtedly trace there the first outlines of speculations of conceptions which afterwards branched out in widely different directions in the ancient world.

In attempting to give any account of the Vaidik gods, we are continually baffled by the contradictory details in the different hymns, arising no doubt in part from the earlier or later date of their composition, but partly from the constant tendency of polytheism to magnify the deity of the moment at the expense of all the rest.

Passing over the tempting speculations suggested by the division of the gods in one hymn (R. V. i. 27,13) into "young" and "old"—if we confine ourselves to the facts presented by the hymns themselves, we find Indra and Agni the most prominent. The former is the deity of the visible firmament—the god of lightning and rain. The phenomena of a tropical rain-storm are continually allegorised as a literal conflict between Indra and the Asura Vritra; and the same thing seems intended by the legends which represent him as recovering the cows which had been stolen by the Asura *Pani*. The offerings of soma juice are supposed to give him strength and courage for the encounter. Agni is generally represented as the priest who summons the gods to the sacrifice and bears the oblation to them; he is also viewed as threefold—terrestrial, as vital warmth and culinary fire; atmospheric, as lightning; and celestial, as the sun and stars. The Sun is frequently addressed as a pre-eminent deity, and an early Hindu authority (Yaska) declares that these three are the only Vaidik deities, and he locates them respectively in the sky, earth, and heaven. This, however, is not the natural inference from the hymns themselves. The Adityas are in the later mythology twelve, corresponding to the twelve months, but in the Rig Veda they appear to be seven,—Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, Varuna, Daksha, Ansa, and Surya or Savitri, and their mother Aditi seems to represent Earth or Nature. Mitra and Varuna are the most important, not only from their greater prominence in the hymns, but also from the identification of the former with the Mithra of the Zendavesta, and of the latter with the *Ouranos* of the Greeks. Mitra seems more connected with the day, and Varuna with the night; and it is remarkable that it is in the hymns addressed to the latter that the moral element in the Veda is most usually found.⁶

⁶ Thus the most deeply religious hymn in the whole Veda (*Atharva*

Varuna is continually addressed as the remover of sickness and sin. Vayu, the Wind, is hardly to be distinguished from Indra, but the Maruts are very commonly represented as the latter's attendants.

The two Aswins are frequently celebrated as precursors of the dawn, and as possessing the power of healing diseases. Rudra (who in the later mythology appears to be a form of Siva) in the Veda appears to be identified with Agni; and Vishnu (far from being one of the supreme triad) seems only a form of the Sun, and his three steps (which in the Epic and Pauranik mythology are connected with the dwarf Avatar) are explained in the Veda, by the oldest commentaries, as either referring to Agni as terrestrial fire, lightning in the firmament, and the sun in heaven; or to the position of the sun on the eastern mountain, in the meridian sky, and the western mountain—*i.e.*, at his rising, culmination, and setting. Other deities are Twashtri, who is the architect of the gods and the former of all things; Ushas, the Dawn (the name is probably akin to Eo and Aurora); and the Visve devah or the various deities in their collective capacity.

Elphinstone in his second book* has shown the difference which exists between the religion of Manu's Institutes and that of the Puranas; and the same remarks of course apply with still greater force to the Veda on which Manu is based. "The great feature of difference is the total absence of the divinities, both *nomina* and *numina*, who have for ages engaged, and to a great degree engrossed, the adoration of the Hindus. We have no indications of a triad, the creative, preserving and destroying power; Brahma does not appear as a deity, and Vishnu, although named, has nothing in common with the Vishnu of the Puranas; no allusion occurs to his avataras. His manifestation as Krishna, the favourite deity of the lower classes, for some centuries at least, does not appear. As a divinity Siva is not named; nor is his type, the Linga, ever adverted to. Durga and her triumphs, and Kali, 'whom the blood of man delights a thousand years,' have no place whatever in the hymns of the Vedas."⁷ We find, indeed, occasional hints, out of which the later legends may have grown; thus the Dwarf Avatar of Vishnu, as mentioned above, has probably arisen from his "three steps"; and Rudra, a form of fire, has easily

V. iv. 16), is addressed to him. See Muir, *Journ. R. A. S.*, 1865, p. 81. May we here compare the *euq̄pov* and *iepa vut* of the Greeks?

* *The History of India.*

⁷ *Wilson's Works*, vol. v. p. 342.

developed into the later Siva. Perhaps the most curious instance of these mythological changes is that of the legend of Vritra. In the nature-worship of the Veda the phenomena of tropical storms are described as a conflict between Indra and the clouds, which are pierced by the thunderbolt and forced to yield up their stores of rain. The clouds are personified as a demon called Vritra or Ahi, and though the language is often hyperbolic, the original meaning of the myth is seldom completely lost sight of. But in the later poems, as the Mahabharata and Puranas, the natural phenomenon is entirely forgotten, and Vritra is a literal king of the Asuras or Titans, who wages war against the gods. It is singular that even in the Brahmanas we find the myth becoming exaggerated; and various legends are given, how Indra incurred the guilt of murder, etc.⁸ There are many similar instances of the misinterpretation of Vaidik legends and hymns by the authors of the Brahmanas—a fact which proves that a considerable interval must have elapsed between the dates of their respective composition.

The original worship described in the hymns of the Rig Veda seems to have been of a simple and patriarchal character. Sacrifices were occasionally offered, but the oblations are chiefly clarified butter poured on the fire, and the expressed juice of the soma plant. The ceremony takes place in the worshipper's house, in a chamber appropriated to the purpose. There is no mention of temples, and images are not alluded to. A purohita or domestic priest appears in the courts of several of the Vaidik kings, and perhaps every rich family may have similarly had its priest. But in some of the hymns we find traces of a much more elaborate ceremonial; and sometimes as many as sixteen priests are mentioned as assisting in the rites. Now, in the Brahmanas and the later Sutra works, we see this development in its full details: and most of the rites described there are public sacrifices which would require the wealth of a chieftain to supply the requisite expense. It is

⁸ *The most curious is that which relates how Twashtri, when Indra slew his son Viswarupa, performed a sacrifice to obtain a son who should avenge his death. In uttering the mantra, in his haste he made a mistake in the accentuation of the word indraghataka, and made it mean "one whose slayer is Indra," instead of "one who is the slayer of Indra." Vritra was the son born by virtue of the rite, but unfortunately he was thus doomed to be the victim instead of the avenger.*

quite true that these later rites are sometimes directly named in the Rig Veda itself, and there are many hymns which are called *danastutis*, and contain the praises of certain kings for their munificent gifts to the priests, which no doubt point to such public occasions. If criticism is ever able to settle the relative antiquity of the different parts of the Rig Veda, these scattered hints will no doubt be one of the most useful criteria.⁹

The sacrifice of the horse, which plays such an important part in later legend, is found in the Rig Veda; two hymns of the second Ashtaka being addressed to the horse; and full details are given in the Brahmanas and Sutras. "As the solemnity appears in the Rig Veda it bears a less poetical, a more barbarous, character, and it may have been a relic of an ante-Vaidik period, imported from some foreign nation, possibly from Scythia, where animal victims, and especially horses, were commonly sacrificed; the latter were also offered by the Massagetae to the sun, and in the second Aswamedhik hymn there are several indications that the victim was especially consecrated to the solar deity; however this may be, the rite as it appears in the Rig Veda can scarcely be considered as constituting an integral element of the archaic system of Hindu worship, although its recognition at all is significant of extant barbarism."¹⁰

The historical allusions in the Veda will be discussed in the next chapter. It will suffice to mention here that though the Rig Veda occasionally names Brahmans and Kshatriyas, we have no allusion to the four castes except in the ninetieth hymn of the tenth Mandala, the language of which is evidently of a more modern style. In the Brahmanas, however, the system of caste is found fully established, and the four classes are repeatedly mentioned by name; and their respective duties are laid down almost as peremptorily as in Manu's Institutes.

The Brahmanas are the Talmud of the Hindus. They contain the details of the ceremonies, with long explanations of the origin and meaning of the rites employed; and they abound with curious legends, divine and human, to illustrate the importance of the different parts. Many of these legends are reproduced in the later classical literature, as that of Sunahsepha, who is sold by his father to be offered as a sacrifice instead of Rohita, Harischandra's son, who had been vowed by his father as an offering to Varuna; this forms an episode in the Ramayana. Similarly the legend of Namuchi, whom Indra promised to harm

⁹ See Muller's *Ancient Sanskrit Lit.*, p. 484.

¹⁰ Wilson, *Rig Veda Trans.*, ii. Pref.

neither by day nor by night, nor by any weapon wet or dry, but whom he afterwards killed at twilight with the foam of the sea, is given in the Mahabharata. A few of the legends are of wider than purely Indian interest; thus the Satapatha Brahmana preserves the earliest Hindu account of the Deluge, where Manu alone is saved in a ship.¹¹ As a general rule, however, the contents of the Brahmanas are wearisome in the extreme; gleams of beautiful thoughts occasionally break out, but these are few and far between, and no part of Hindu literature presents so little (apart from its scientific value) to interest the reader.¹² The Brahmanical intellect in these productions (as compared with the manly strength of the Rig Veda hymns) seems like one of Gulliver's "*Struldbrugs*" living on a piteous wreck, smitten with palsy in the midst of its vigour.

But the Brahmanical intellect, however debased for a time by a meaningless ritualism, was still capable of a higher life, and in the Aranyakas and Upanishads we find it awaking from its dream of endless ceremonies to grapple with the deepest problems of life and eternity. Childish and fantastic as these books appear, they are full of fine thoughts, and sometimes they show deep feeling: and no Hindu works have probably exercised a wider influence on the world. It is from these forlorn "guesses at truth," as from a fountain, that all those various rills of Pantheistic speculation have diverged, which, under different names, are so continually characterised as "Eastern philosophy." Thus the reader of the Upanishads soon recognizes familiar ideas in the speculations of the Phaedrus as well as in Empedocles or Pythagoras—in the Neo-platonism of the Alexandrian, as well as in the Gnostic schools, although Plotinus aimed to emancipate Greek philosophy from the influence of the Oriental mind; and the Cabala of the Jews and the Sufeyism of the Muhammadans seem to be derived from the same source. We

¹¹ Muir, in his *Sanskrit Texts*, vol. ii., has given an interesting history of the legend as it reappears in the Mahabharata and Puranas. It is remarkable that in the Brahmana the exit of Manu from the ship is connected with sacrifice. (Gen. viii. 20), and his daughter Ila, produced from the oblation, is the personified sacrifice.

¹² We have two Brahmanas extant belonging to the Rig Veda, that of the Aitareyins and the Kaushitakins, two of the Rig Veda schools or charanas. Each of the Yajur Vedas has its own Brahmana: the Sama Veda has eight (including the Chhandogya Upanishada), the most important of which is the Panchavinsa; the Atharva Veda has one, the Gopatha Brahmana. Many of the Brahmanas are lost.

are too apt to look on the ancient world as a scene of stagnation where men's thoughts were as confined as their bodies; as if the few who travelled in foreign countries could not bring home and circulate there the ideas which they had learned abroad, and as if the few thinkers, groping in the darkness of Gentile speculation, were not eager to embrace any light which presented itself.¹³ The spread of such a religion as Buddhism shows how men's minds were awake to new ideas, even though they came from foreign countries; and why should the tradition of the Eastern origin of much of early Greek philosophy be incredible or even improbable?

The Aranyakas are treatises which were to be read by the Brahmans in their third stage as *Vanaprasthas*, and the name is derived from *aranya*, "a forest," i.e., that which is to be read in a forest. There are four extant, the Brihad, the Taittiriya, the Aitareya, and the Kaushitaki. The Upanishads are short treatises, which frequently form part of an Aranyaka; but many of them are detached works; a great number belong to the Atharva Veda, and two (the Isa and the Siva-sankalpa) are found in the Sanhita of the White Yajur Veda. Their number is uncertain, but the latest catalogue gives the names of 149.¹⁴ Many are very modern, but some are of very high antiquity. The later ones are sectarian in their character and closely connected with the Puranas and the exclusive worship of Vishnu or Siva.

The word *upanishad* is defined by Hindu authors as that which destroys ignorance and thus produces liberation; and from these treatises has been developed the Vedanta system of philosophy, which is considered by all orthodox Hindus as the *Brahma jnana*, or pure spiritual knowledge. The ceremonial observances of the Vaidik ritual (or *Karma Kanda*) are necessary as a preliminary condition in order to purify the mind and to prepare it for the proper reception of the sublime truths to be imparted; and the other systems of philosophy may be relatively true, in regard to the student's degree of intellectual capacity; but the only absolute truth is the Vedantic interpretation of the Upanishads.

When we examine the older Upanishads, however, we are struck by one remarkable peculiarity—the total absence of any Brahmanical exclusiveness in their doctrine. They are evidently later than the older Sanhitas¹⁵ and Brahmanas; but they breathe an entirely different

¹³ Are not Simmias' words in the *Phædo*, § xxxv., p. 85, indications of Plato's own feeling?

¹⁴ See Professor Max Muller's list in the *Zeitschrift d. D.M.G.* vol. xix. p. 137.

¹⁵ The White Yajur Veda is acknowledged on all hands to be

spirit, a freedom of thought unknown in any earlier work except the Rig Veda hymns themselves. The great teachers of this highest knowledge are not Brahmans but Kshatriyas, and Brahmans are continually represented as going to the great Kshatriya kings (especially Janaka of Videha), to become their pupils. The most remarkable of these passages is the following, in the Chhandogya Upanishad (v. 3). The Rishi Gautama sends his son to visit King Pravahana, who propounds certain hard questions relative to the future life. The son cannot answer them, and returns to ask his father, who is equally at a loss. Gautama then goes himself to the king, and begs to be instructed by him. The king complies with his wish, after first premising as follows : "This knowledge before thee never came to the Brahmans ; therefore, hitherto, in all worlds the right of teaching it has belonged exclusively to the Kshatriya caste." When we couple with this the remarkable fact that the Gayatri itself, the most sacred symbol in the universe, is a verse in a hymn by an author not a Brahman by birth, but a Kshatriya, who is represented in later legend as extorting his admission into the Brahman caste, we can hardly escape the inference that it was the Kshatriya mind which first followed out these bold speculations. The Brahmans, as far as we can see by the Brahmanas, became immersed in the trivialities of an unmeaning ritual—their philosophy, if such they had, was only the Purva Mimansa, where the grave problems of life and death are forgotten for elaborate discussions as to the number of jars of the baked flour-cake, or the exact order of the verses to be repeated at an offering ; and such laborious and aimless trifling could not co-exist with earnestness or deep speculation. Kshatriya thinkers arose to initiate a new movement in philosophy, just as a Kshatriya thinker initiated Buddhism, as a protest against the system of caste ; and the Brahmans were wise enough to adopt the new ideas and eventually to secure the monopoly of instruction therein to themselves. That the Brahmans and Kshatriyas were not already so harmonious in the social world as they appear in the Institutes seems shown by such legends as those which describe the Brahman Rama Jamadagnya as having cleared the earth thrice seven times of the Kshatriya race and filled five large lakes with their blood, and then again as himself worsted in the contest by the Kshatriya Rama, the son of Dasaratha ; and these vague hints in the Upanishads seem to show us that they were sometimes rivals in literature as well. The Upanishads are usually in the form of dialogue ; they are generally written in prose with occasional snatches of verse, but sometimes they are in verse

much more modern than the rest. See Muller's Ancient Sansk. Lit., pp. 349-54.

altogether. They have no system or method ; the authors are poets, who throw out their unconnected and often contradictory rhapsodies on the impulse of the moment, and have no thought of harmonizing to-day's feelings with those of yesterday or to-morrow. The poet's imagination is ever at work, tracing out new resemblances on all sides ; and the ritual ceremonial as well as the order of nature is ransacked to supply analogies to the past and future history of the soul. Through them all runs an unmistakable spirit of Pantheism, often in its most offensive form, as avowedly over-riding all moral considerations ; and it is this which has produced the general impression that the religion of the Vedas is monotheistic. Men have judged from the Upanishads and the few hymns of the Rig Veda which breathe a similar spirit. Of course these early speculations have no system, although later writers have strained their ingenuity to invent one. The Upanishads stand to the later Vedanta as the oracular denunciations of Heraclitus *ho skoteinos* stand to the fully developed system of the Platonic philosophy.

We have reserved the Atharva Veda to the end, because it is evidently dissociated from the other three in its matter and style as well as by the tradition of the Hindus themselves. Whether it belongs to the Brahmana or to the Upanishad period cannot be determined ; but probably much of the tenth mandala of the Rig Veda was composed about the same time. It consists of the magic songs of the Atharvans or the Atharvangirasas ; and is therefore chiefly composed of imprecations and deprecatory formulae. Mixed with these are occasional hymns of great beauty and even moral feeling ; thus one of its imprecations contains imbedded in it the grand verses to Varuna, describing his omnipresence, already alluded to. Like the Rig Veda, it is a collection of hymns, and not a body of liturgical forms ; and next to the Rig Veda and the Upanishads it is much the most interesting part of Vaidik literature. Its Brahmana, the Gopatha, is exactly like other Brahmanas ; but it is peculiarly rich in Upanishads, as no less than fifty-two Upanishads (and among these, several, as the Mandukya and Prasna, which are considered of the highest importance by the Vedanta school) bear the name of the Atharva Veda.¹⁶

¹⁶ *There is an interesting paper by Muir in the Journ. R. A. S., vol. i., new series, on the doctrine of a future life according to the Vedas. In the earlier books of the Rig V. there is little reference to a future state, but in the ninth and tenth it is frequently mentioned. A state of blessedness is distinctly promised to the virtuous ; and these allusions are more full and frequent in the Atharva. In some passages of the latter the family ties of earth are represented as renewed in*

Connected with the Vaidik literature are the Kalpa-Sutras, which are practical manuals of the sacrificial and other rites, drawn up for the convenience of the priests, who would otherwise have had to search through the liturgical Sanhitas and Brahmanas for the *disjecta membra* of the different ceremonies. Thus there are the Kalpa-sutras for the Hotri priests by Aswalayana and Sankhayana—for the Adhwaryus by Apastamba, Baudhayana and Katyayana—and the Udgatris by Latyayana and Drahyayana. These Kalpa-sutras form the most important of the six Vedangas or “members of the Veda,” i.e., the six subjects whose study was necessary for the reading or proper sacrificial employment of the Veda. The other five are Siksha (pronunciation), Chhandas (metre), Vyakarana (grammar), Nirukta (explanation of words), and Jyotisha (astronomy).¹⁷

heaven. In the Rig Veda we have no traces of the doctrine of transmigration, but a passage in the Satapatha Br. describes how the various animals and plants in a future state would devour those who had eaten them in the present life, unless they were secured by the regular performance of sacrifices during life. The allusions to a future state of punishment in the Vaidik writings are few and obscure. There are very few passages in the Brahmanas which speak of anything like absorption in the deity, an idea which we find in so many of the Upanishads—in fact, the older works display nothing of that discontent with existence which afterwards became such a prominent feature of Hindu thought.

¹⁷ The reader desirous of pursuing the subject of the Vedas further is referred to Professor Max Muller's *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, which contains a mine of most valuable information, and is at the same time as interesting as a novel. Professor Wilson's translation of the Rig Veda, and Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, vols. iii. iv., are also very important works.

CHAPTER VII

THE BRAHMANICAL TRIBES AND THE ABORIGINES

By E. B. COWELL

It was at first supposed that Sanskrit was the common mother of the other Indo-European languages; but this is disproved, among other reasons, by the fact that some of the European languages (more especially Latin), preserve forms and roots which are lost even in the oldest Sanskrit of the Vaidik time. Thus the final *s* of the nominative singular is lost in all Sanskrit nouns ending in consonants, as in *vak* (from *vach*), and *bhavan* (the present participle of *bhu*, *phu*—"to be"), although its original presence is still indicated in the former word by the change of *ch* to *k* which a following *s* would necessitate according to Sanskrit rules of euphony; but in the Latin *vox* (*vok-s*) and *amans* the suffix is still clearly visible. Thus *vox*, *voces*, *vocem*, *amans*, *amantes*, *amantem* help us to explain the similar Sanskrit forms *vak* (i.e., *vak-s*), *vachas*, *vacham*, *bhavan* (i.e. *bhavans*), *bhavantas*, *bhavantam*. Again the Sanskrit *naman* cannot be explained by a native etymology; but the Latin *gnomen* (as in *cognomen*) at once discloses its connexion with the common root, *jna*, *gno*-, "to know." So *tara*, "a star," has even in the Veda lost its initial *s*, which gives the true etymology from *stri* "to scatter," and which is preserved in every other kindred language, as *aster* in Greek, *stare* in Zend, *stella* (*sterula*?) in Latin, etc. Similarly the lost Sanskrit roots *dhu* "to sacrifice" (for *hu*), and *dhan* "to kill," preserved in *han* and the derivatives, *pradhana*, "conflict," and *midhana*, "death," still exist in the Greek *thu*—and *than*—; and so the Latin *sub* and *super*, and the Greek *hupo* and *huper* preserve the initial sibilant which is lost in *upa* and *upari*.

The truth is that the Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Gothic, Slavonic and Celtic languages must all have sprung from one common source,—they are sisters, though Sanskrit may be considered the eldest, inasmuch as it generally preserves the earliest forms, and its structure is the most transparent for philological purposes.

It is quite true that all this similarity and linguistic sympathy only prove the fact of a connexion; but they "prove nothing regarding the place where it subsisted, nor about the time" but perhaps the following considerations may throw some light on this further question.

a. A central home, once occupied by the ancestors of these now widely scattered nations, seems *prima facie* more probable than to

suppose that they emigrated from the farthest extremity of the line, as India ; and this is confirmed by the fact that the Western languages preserve no trace of any tropical residence, while the Vaidik use of such words as *hima*, "winter," for "year," and such traditions¹ as those which represent the Uttara Kurus in the far north as the sacred land of mythology, do seem to imply some trace of northern reminiscence.

b. Again, the fact of a subject caste like the Sudras, existing as they did outside the pale of the twice-born, is no strange phenomenon in ancient history ; it is one which meets us everywhere, if we can only pierce below the surface, and examine the strata of society. It is familiar enough to the student of Greek and Roman history, in the *demos* of the Greek states and colonies, the plebs of Rome, the Pericæci and Helots of Sparta, and the Tyrrhenes of Etruria ; and the same phenomenon reappeared in mediæval Europe. In the cases where we can explain it, it seems always due to foreign conquest, and this analogy at once suggests a similar solution in the history of ancient India.

c. This hypothesis is confirmed by the facts mentioned by Elphinstone in his first book,* relative to the Sudra kingdoms, where Manu forbids a twice-born man to reside ; but it is still more confirmed by the intimations of the Rig-Veda. The Hindus of that early age are evidently settled in the north-west, with a hostile population near them ; they call on Indra to assist his fair-complexioned friends, the Aryas,² against the dark Dasyus,³ who are stigmatized as "non-sacrificing" (*ayajwanah*), or "having no religious observances" (*avratah*), and as "slaves" (*dasah*). In one place (R. V. i. 130, 8) we have the following verse : "Indra, who in a hundred ways

¹ I may add here, that in India I used to find that the pandits were impressed, in reference to this very point, by the singular phrase in the legend of the Deluge in the Satapatha Brahmana, "This was Manu's descent from the northern mountain."

* The History of India.

² For the history of this old word, which is still found in the 'Arioi, the old name of the Medes, the modern Iran, etc., see Professor Max Muller's Lectures on Language, vol. i. I need hardly recommend to my readers such well-known volumes as these lectures, which have in fact done more to create an English interest in these studies than all other philological books put together. We see there what genius and learning can do, when united.

³ Manu says (x. 45), "Those tribes in the world which are outside of the castes produced from Brahman's head, hands, thighs and feet, whether they speak Mlechchha language or Arya language, are called Dasyus."

protects in all battles, in heaven-conferring battles, has preserved in the fray the sacrificing Arya. Chastising the neglecters of religious rites, he subjected the black skin (*twacham krishnam*) to Manu." In fact, this old conflict seems perpetuated by the common Sanskrit word for caste, *varna*, which originally meant "colour." The Dasyus were not mere barbarians; their "hundred cities" are frequently alluded to; but it is not impossible that they had some physical peculiarities which distinguished them from the Caucasian invaders, as a favourite epithet of the Aryan god, Indra, is *susipra*, "with a beautiful nose or jaw," which may have been intended as a contrast to the flat noses of the aborigines. The same idea probably reappears in the Ramayana legend of the monkey tribes of the Deckan; the very name of one of their leaders, Hanumat, "the large-jawed," is a curious contrast to the *susipra* of the Vedas.

d. To this we may add the various passages in the Vaidik writings⁴ which represent the twice-born tribes as gradually spreading to the east and south from their original seats between the Indus and the Saraswati. In the Rig Veda we find that the Indus and the river of the Panjab are well known, and so are the Yamuna and the Saraswati, but the Ganges is only directly named once, and that in the last book. In the same way it is silent respecting any of the great rivers of the Deckan, as the Nerbadda and Godavari, nor is there any mention of the Vindhya. Its geography, in fact, is as contracted when compared to that of Manu as this is to that of the Ramayana or the Puranas. In the later Vaidik writings we can trace a gradual acquaintance with the country beyond; and the most interesting of these passages is the following legend from the Satapatha Brahmana of the White Yajur Veda, which can hardly be anything else than a dim recollection of the gradual spread eastward of the religious rites of the Brahmanical tribes.

"Mathava the Videgha bore Agni Vaiswanara in his mouth. The rishi Gotama Rahugana was his family priest. Though addressed by him, he (Mathava) did not answer, 'lest' (he thought) 'Agni should escape from my mouth.' The priest began to invoke Agni with verses of the Rig Veda, 'We kindle thee at the sacrifice, O wise Agni, the sacrificer, the luminous, the mighty, O Videgha' [R.V. v. 26]. He made no answer. [The priest then repeated] 'Thy bright, brilliant, flaming beams and rays mount upwards, O Agni, O Videgha' [R.V. viii. 44]. Still he made no answer. The priest then recited, 'Thee, O dropper of butter, we invoke,' etc. [R.V. v. 26].

⁴ These have been carefully collected by Muir in the second volume of his *Sanskrit Texts*—a work, every volume of which abounds with stores of information to the student of Hindu antiquity. I have been continually indebted to it in the course of this Appendix.

So far he uttered, when, immediately on the mention of butter, Agni Vaiswanara flashed forth from his mouth ; he could not restrain him, so he issued from his mouth and fell down to this earth. The Videgha Mathava was then on the Saraswati. Agni then traversed this earth, burning towards the east. Gotama Rahugana and the Videgha Mathava followed after him as he burned onward. He burnt across all these rivers ; but he did not burn across the Sadanira⁵, which descends from the northern mountain. The Brahmans formerly did not use to cross this river, because it had not been burnt across by Agni Vaiswanara. But now many Brahmans live to the east of it. It used to be uninhabitable and swampy, being untasted by Agni Vaiswanara. It is now, however, habitable ; for Brahmans have caused it to be tasted by sacrifices. In the end of summer this river is, as it were, incensed, being still cold, not having been burnt across by Agni Vaiswanara.”⁶

e. We come to the same result, if we trace the gradual development of the four castes in the Vedas. In the Rig Veda the caste system of later times is wholly unknown. Traces of the three twice-born classes are indeed to be found. Thus the Brahmans seem referred to in the word *brahman*, “priest,” and sometimes we have the actual word *Brahmana* ; and similarly we may find the initial hints of the later Kshatriyas and Vaisyas ; but it is entirely silent as to the Sudras, with the exception of the one well-known verse in the ninetieth hymn of the tenth book, the language of which is undoubtedly more modern than most of the other hymns. But in the other Vedas we find the caste system fully developed. All this harmonizes with the hypothesis that the Sudra caste arose as the twice-born gradually subjugated the aborigines of the north.

f. These vague hints are moreover fully confirmed by the actual linguistic condition of India at the present day. This alone might not be of much weight ; but it seems to bring strong confirmation when we find that the present distribution of Indian languages is exactly what it would be if our hypothesis of the invading Brahmanical tribes were correct. The languages of the people north, and immediately south, of the Vindhya, as Bengali, Hindi, Guzerati, Marathi, Uriya, etc., are all saturated with Sanskrit ; it is probable that in each of them there is a non-Sanskrit basis, but this has been so overlaid by Sanskrit that it is hardly recognizable without close scrutiny. Take away the Sanskrit element, and nothing worthy of

⁵ This is probably the Gandak. It is afterwards described in the *Brahmana* as forming the boundary between Oudh and North Behar.

⁶ Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, vol. ii. p. 420.

being called a language remains.⁷ But in the south of India the languages are distinctly of a non-Sanskrit, and probably Turanian, type; and the languages of the mountaineer tribes in nearly all parts of India seem to belong to this latter family. Now, what is the case in Great Britain, where the constituent elements of the population and their mutual relation are historically known? The Saxon and Norman conquerors came in from the south and south-east; and they entirely subdued England and partly subjugated the south of Scotland; but the ancient Celtic inhabitants maintained their independence in the mountains of Wales and the Highlands of Scotland; and this historical fact is exactly repeated in the present distribution of the English, Gaelic, and Cymric languages. This argument, as so many others, is only one from analogy; but it must not be overlooked that all our facts and inferences, with regard to the population of ancient India, point unanimously in one direction.

g.....It is quite true that "neither in the Code nor in the Vedas, nor in any book that is certainly older than the Code, is there any allusion to a prior residence or to a knowledge of more than the name of any country out of India. Even mythology goes no further than the Himalaya chain, in which is fixed the habitation of the gods." But could not the same be said with equal truth of the ancient Greeks, if we only substitute Homer and Hesiod for the Veda and Manu, and Olympus for Himalaya? The truth is that a nation in its nomad state has no proper literature, and therefore no historical memory; these rise slowly after it has settled in towns, and by that time the pride of being *Autochthones* has probably erased all traces of any foreign origin.

....."Where could the central point be, from which a language could spread over India, Greece, and Italy, and yet leave Chaldæa, Syria, and Arabia untouched?" Of course we cannot answer the question, in our utter ignorance of the causes or course of these ancient currents of migration. We have here the two great streams of the Semitic and Aryan tribes, which Providence undoubtedly did keep distinct in the ancient world, as indeed seems symbolised by the very languages in which the Old and New Testaments are written. By what particular series of events the distinction was originally produced and maintained, we cannot determine: but we can plainly see that Jewish, Chaldæan, and Arabian civilization did, in the main, run their own career, just as those of ancient India, Greece, and Rome. Nor is it, perhaps, unreasonable to guess that

⁷ Cf. Rajendra Lala Mitra's paper on the Hindi language, Journ. B.A.S., 1864.

the mountain chain of the Caucasus may have interposed a barrier to the southern advance of the Aryan tribes, just as it did to the Cimmerian fugitives of Herodotus ; and similarly the Tartar invaders of more modern times have passed onward into Europe through Persia and Armenia, and generally left Palestine and Arabia untouched.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHINESE BUDDHIST PILGRIMS IN INDIA

By E. B. COWELL

A BUDDHIST missionary probably penetrated into China more than 200 years before our era, but it was not until A.D. 65 that Buddhism became one of the established religions of the empire. India was always regarded as the cradle of the Buddha faith; and when in process of time the purity of the Chinese branch degenerated, and divisions arose as to its doctrines and precepts, a succession of Chinese travellers made pilgrimages to India to procure copies of the sacred works and to gain fresh instruction from the fountain-head. Their accounts have only lately been rendered accessible to the European student by the labours of the late Abel Remusat and Stanislas Julien. They throw, for the fifth and seventh centuries of our era, the same side-light on the actual state of India which the Greek accounts throw for the third and fourth centuries B.C.; and enable us to form an outline picture of a period which in India's own literature is almost as mythic and imaginary as the Satya Yug or the Mahabharata war.

The earliest known Chinese traveller was Chi-tao-an; he came to India at the commencement of the fourth century, but his work is lost. He was followed by Fa-hian, who travelled in Central Asia and India from A.D. 399 to 414. A century afterwards, two more, Hoei-seng and Song-yun, travelled some years in the north of India; but their account is very brief. They were succeeded by Hiouen Thsang, whose ample narrative is the subject of the present work.¹ His example was followed by some pilgrims in the eighth century and by Khinie, who visited India in 964 with three hundred ascetics, but these are of little interest.

Fa-hian's narrative was translated into French by Abel Remusat and others in 1836, and an English version from the French was published by Laidlay in Calcutta, 1848. His book consists of forty short chapters, but the narrative is entirely confined to Buddhist details, and hence we do not gain much information from it regarding the condition of the Brahmanical population. He seldom mentions anything in any place which he visits beyond the Buddhist shrines which were the resort of pilgrims, and the legends with

¹ *Hiouen Thsang gives an account of 138 kingdom, of which he himself visited 110.*

which they were associated. He seems to have passed through the territory of the Oigours, Khotan, Kabul, Udyana, and Gandhara, and he then describes his route in India. He mentions, among other places, Takshasila (Taxila), Mathura, Sankasya, Kanouj (where he sees the Heng or Ganges), Kosala, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, and Vaisali. He next visits Magadha, with its capital Pataliputra; and here the very number of sacred places mentioned makes it difficult to determine his route. We can trace him as visiting Nalanda, Rajagriha, Gridhrakuta, and Gaya: he then goes westward to Benares (where he particularly mentions the deer-park of Sarnath), and Kausambi. Fa-hian here devotes a short chapter to the kingdom of the Deckan (Tha thsen), and describes some cavern temples, which may perhaps be those of Ellora. He then returns from Benares to Pataliputra, where he spends three years in a monastery, "studying the books and the *Fan* language and copying the precepts."² He next goes down the Ganges to Champa and Tamralipti (Tamluk); at the latter place he remained two years, "transcribing the sacred books, and depicting the images." He thence sails to Ceylon, where he stayed two years, and collected several rare works in the *Fan* language; he mentions the honour paid there to Buddha's tooth, and describes Buddhism as flourishing in the highest degree. On his homeward voyage he visits Java; "heretics and Brahmans were numerous there, and the law of Buddha in nowise entertained."

Hiouen Thsang's book is a very different work, and its publication forms an era in the history of Indian research. The first of Julien's three volumes contains the memoirs of Hiouen Thsang, as written by two of his disciples; the other two give the *ta-thang-si-yu-ki*, or "memoires sur les contrees occidentales," the original compilation of the pilgrim himself.

Hiouen Thsang appears to have been an ardent student of Buddhist philosophy in several monasteries in China, until at last, in the year 629, when twenty-six years of age, he conceived the design of seeking in India the solution of the various doubts which perplexed his mind, and which none of the Chinese sages could resolve. He has to set out on his journey westward alone.

He starts from the N.W. extremity of China, and pursues his adventurous route through the country of the Oigours, and other Tartar tribes; thus he mentions the kingdoms of O-ki-ni, and Kou-tche (Kharashar?). At the latter place he stops sixty days, on

² He says that he had from the first inquired for the precepts, but all the masters of the kingdoms in the north had transmitted these from mouth to mouth, without ever reducing the volume to writing; on this account he had come so far and reached mid-India.

account of the snow interrupting the roads; and he thence goes to Pa-lou-kia, which seems to be the same as the modern province of Aksu. In all these countries he finds Buddhism more or less prevalent. He then crosses the mountain Ling-chan (Musur Aola), which occupies more than a week; here he loses several of his companions from hunger and cold, and many of the beasts of burden. He next skirts the shore of the lake Thsing-tchi (Issikul), and arrives at the city Sou-che, where he meets with the Turki-Khan; he notices that his people were fire-worshippers. He then travels on to Tchi-chi (Chash or Tashkend), crosses the Jaxartes, and visits Samarkand, which is entirely inhabited by fire-worshippers. He then proceeds through the pass called the "Iron Gates" (Derbend), enters the kingdom of Tukhara, and crosses the Oxus. He describes Tukhara as divided into twenty-seven states, "which, though to some extent independent, are generally subject to the Turks." Here he finds Buddhism held in respect, and still more so in Balkh, where there were 100 convents containing 3,000 monks. He next reaches Bamyan (where Buddhism is very flourishing), and crosses the Hindu Kush. He thence visits Kapisa (the Capissa of Pliny), which is under a Kshatriya king, to whom ten kingdoms are subject; here he finds 100 convents with 6,000 monks, but also scores of temples and many sects of heretics, some of whom went about naked, others rubbed themselves with ashes or wore skulls as ornaments. Near the capital he passes, on a mountain called Pilusara, the first of the long series of Asoka's *stupas* or monuments erected over relics.³ On leaving Kapisa he crosses a mountain range to the east, and then enters Northern India.⁴

He first visits Lampa or Lamghan, "north of which," it is said, "the frontier countries are called Mie-li-tche (*Mlechchhas*)"; then he comes to Nagarahara, where, to the south-west of the city, there was a cave in which Buddha was said to have left his shadow. Here the disciples, in their memoirs, indulge their imagination, and describe their master as extorting, by his prayers, such a clear vision

³ He is said to have erected in different parts of India 84,000 such monuments. Hiouen Thsang finds them everywhere.

⁴ Hiouen Thsang knew Sanskrit, and endeavoured throughout his itinerary in India to give the Indian names as far as the peculiar syllabic structure of the Chinese language admitted. Julien has discovered a method for detecting the Sanskrit names and words under their Chinese disguises, and we can thus recover with certainty the Sanskrit equivalent in nearly every instance. Thus Ti-po-ta-to represents Devadatta, and Tou-ho-lo, Tukhara. We shall give some more examples further on.

of the sacred symbol, as had been rarely conceded to any man ; but Hiouen Thsang himself only remarks that "in old times the appearance was seen as luminous as if it were Buddha himself, but in these later ages one no longer sees it completely ; something is, indeed, perceived, but it is only a feeble and doubtful resemblance."⁵ South-east of this lay Gandhara, with its capital, Purushapura, at this time subject to Kapisa. He describes the inhabitants as effeminate, but greatly devoted to literature ; and he mentions it as the birthplace of many Indian doctors, who have composed (Buddhist) Shastras. He found its 1,000 convents and numerous *stupas* deserted and in ruins ; there were 100 temples and heretics of all sorts in abundance. There were several monuments of the great kings Asoka and Kanishka ; and he also expressly mentions a temple sacred to Maheswara, as well as a celebrated statue of his wife, the goddess Pi-mo (*Bhima*), in blue stone. In his account of the city Salatura, he gives a curious legend about Panini, and describes his grammar as still studied by the Brahmans of the place.

He thence visited Udyana, to the north, but most of its 1,400 convents were in ruins. Next he went to Bolor, and thence turned southward to Takshasila (which formerly belonged to Kapisa, but was then subject to Kashmir), Sinhapura, Urasī, and Kashmir. The latter country he found under the dominion of the Ki-li-to (*Kritiya*) dynasty, which patronised the Brahmanical faith ; but there were many learned Buddhists in the various convents, and our traveller stayed there two years copying and studying the sacred books. He then visits Panch and Rajapura, and remarks that all the countries from Langhan to this last place are more or less barbarous, and do not properly belong to India.⁶

Hiouen Thsang thence goes southward to Cheka, where he sees the ruins of the ancient city Sakala (the Sagala or Sangala of the Greeks), Chinapati, where he remains studying fourteen months,—Jalandhara, where he remains four months,—and Kuluta (where he crosses the Satlaj). He next proceeds southward to a country called Po-li-ye-to-lo, which appears to be the Matsya district of Manu, as

⁵ Similarly, in vol. i. p. 286, Hiouen Thsang mentions another place where Buddha had left his shadow ; but he adds, "although this is related in the historical memoirs, nowadays absolutely nothing is to be seen."

⁶ Hiouen Thsang's itinerary has been admirably illustrated by M. L. Vivien de Saint Martin in his *Memoire Analytique* appended to Julien's second volume of the *Si-yu-ki*. For Northern India we have an invaluable supplement in General Cunningham's report of his *Archæological Surveys*, in 1861-63, published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*.

this is explained by Kulluka as Virata, which has been supposed to be Macheri or Jaipur. Hiouen Thsang describes the inhabitants as averse to letters, and devoted to heretical doctrines and war.⁷

He next comes to Mathura (Mattra),⁸ and here his narrative throws great light on the political condition of the Doab in the seventh century. He visits and describes Tanesar, with its 3 convents, its 100 temples, and swarms of heretics⁹—Srughna (?), with its ruined capital (here he finds 5 convents and 100 temples, and remains studying with a renowned doctor some months)—Matipura (?), on the Ganges, where the Buddhist and Brahmanical faiths have an equal number of adherents, and the king is a Sudra, but does not follow the law of Buddha,—Brahmapura (?),—Ahichchhatra (the Adisadra of Ptolemy),—and Sankasya,¹⁰ the old city mentioned in the Ramayana, and which General Cunningham discovered in the ruins near the present village of Samkassa. General Cunningham found a tank there, where a Naga is still propitiated by offerings of milk whenever rain is wanted, just as it was in A.D. 400, when Fa-hian visited the spot.

The next place visited was Kanyakubja,—he describes its capital as 20 *li*¹¹ in length and 5 in breadth. Its king, Harsha-var dhana, was of the Vaisya cast; he had succeeded his elder brother Rajya-var dhana, who had been treacherously killed by Sasanka, an anti-Buddhist king in eastern India, and on his accession had assumed the name of Siladitya.¹² The new king had established his supre-

⁷ Cf. Elphinstone's *History of India*, p. 27, note.

⁸ He finds at Mathura 20 convents, with 2,000 monks, and 5 temples. As Fa-hian had found 20 convents with 3,000 monks, and Mahmud in his letter speaks of innumerable temples, we can distinctly trace the gradual decline of Buddhism and revival of Brahmanism between the fifth and seventh centuries.

⁹ Near Tanesar he sees Kurukshetra, the old battle-field of the Mahabharata war, and he gives a curiously distorted version of the tradition.

¹⁰ Hiouen Thsang calls it Kie-pi-tha, but his account of the temple with Buddha's triple ladder identifies it with Fa-hian's Seng-kia-shi. It was a very celebrated place of Buddhist pilgrimage.

¹¹ 5 *li* are said to be rather more than one mile.

¹² Some of these facts have been remarkably illustrated and confirmed by Dr. Hall, from the recently discovered work of Bana, the *Harshacharita*. See his analysis in the Preface to his edition of the *Vasavadatta*, and also *Journ. B.A.S.* 1862. It is said (*Vie de H. T.*, p. 215), that Siladitya died in A.D. 650, and after his death India was devastated by war and famine.

macy over all India, and was a most zealous patron of Buddhism. There were 100 convents and 10,000 monks; and also 200 temples of the Brahmans. He describes the kingdom as wealthy and full of foreign merchandise—"the cities are all defended by solid walls and deep ditches."

He next went to O-yu-to (which is supposed to have been some capital of Ayodhya on the Ganges); here he found 100 convents and only 10 temples. He then goes down to the river to Hayamukha (?),—on his voyage, his ship is attacked by robbers devoted to the goddess Durga, who have an annual custom of sacrificing one of their captives, and they fix on the Chinese pilgrim as their victim. The memoirs expatiate on his calmness amidst his terrified companions—he resigns himself to his fate, and only regrets that the premature termination of his journey will issue in future evil to his captors; but a sudden storm alarms the robbers, and they release him with his friends. He next visits Prayaga, at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna—here he finds only two small convents—"there are many hundreds of temples and the number of heretics is enormous." He expressly mentions one very celebrated temple of immense wealth and sanctity with a large tree in its principal court, from whose top pilgrims used to throw themselves down in order to die in such a sacred spot;¹³ he also mentions the custom of devotees drowning themselves at the point of confluence. Southwest of Prayaga there was a dense forest infested with wild beasts and elephants. He next visits Kausambi, where he finds 10 convents in ruins, and 50 flourishing temples.

He next turns northward to Vaisakha (?), which General Cunningham identifies with the Hindu Saketa or the ancient Ayodhya on the river Sarayu; and thence to Sravasti. He describes the capital of the latter kingdom as in ruins and almost deserted; there were many ruined convents, but the Brahmanical temples seem to have been numerous and frequented.¹⁴ Thence he goes to Kapilavastu,—“here there are 10 deserted towns, and the royal city is in ruins; the palace, in the middle of the capital, was once 14 or 15 *li* in circumference, and was entirely built of bricks—its ruins are still lofty and solid, but it has been deserted for ages. The villages are

¹³ This is the celebrated *akshay Bat*, or “indestructible figtree.” *Abd ul kadir* in the *Muntakhab ut Tawarikh*, mentions the same practice as still prevalent in Akber’s time. See Gen. Cunningham’s Report (Journ. B.A.S. 1865).

¹⁴ Gen. Cunningham identifies Sravasti with the ruined city on the Rapti, still called *Sahet-Mahet*. Sravasti in Magadhi becomes *Sawatthi*.

thinly peopled—there is no king—every town has its own chief. There were once about 1,000 convents the ruins of which still remain.” The various spots were still pointed out which were associated with the memorable events in Sakya Muni’s life, and on most of them *viharas* had been erected. He next goes eastward through a dense forest to Ramagrama, which was then only a desert—it abounded with the ruins of convents and *stupas*, but most of the country was covered with forests full of wild beasts and robbers; and the same desolation prevailed in Kusinagara, the celebrated spot where Sakya Muni entered into *nirvana*.¹⁵ Hiouen Thsang then turns to the south-west, and, after passing through a vast forest, reaches Benares.

He describes the kingdom as thickly filled with populous villages—the majority of the inhabitants believed heretical doctrines, and there were few who revered the law of Buddha. There were 30 convents with about 3,000 monks, and 100 temples and 10,000 heretics, devoted for the most part to Maheswara. “Some cut their hair, others leave a tuft on the top of the head and go about quite naked (the Nirgranthas), others rub their bodies with ashes (the Pasupatas), and zealously practise painful penances to escape from life and death.” “In the capital there are 20 temples. They have towers of many stories, and magnificent chapels built of stones elaborately carved and of wood richly painted. Thick trees cover them with their shade, and streams of pure water flow round them. The statue of Maheswara, which is made of brass, is nearly 100 feet high. His aspect is grave and majestic, and, on seeing him, one feels respectful fear as if he were still living.”

He visits the deer-park of Sarnath, with its convent containing 1,500 monks,¹⁶ and then journeys north-eastward to Vaisali, passing on the way a celebrated temple of Narayana. He describes the capital as a heap of ruins, covering a circumference of 60 or 70 *li*. The district abounded with Buddhist monuments, and there were many ruined convents, but only three or four were inhabited; there were scores of temples, and a multitude of heretics, especially of those who go naked. As Fa-hian describes Vaisali without alluding

¹⁵ Gen. Cunningham identifies this with the ruins of Kasia, 35 miles east from Gorakhpur; one of the mounds is still called the “fort of the dead prince.”

¹⁶ Gen. Cunningham gives an interesting account of the excavations which have been carried on at different times in Sarnath; everywhere we find traces of destruction by fire, as if the monks had been suddenly surprised and forced to fly; even the remains of ready-made wheaten cakes were found in one of the chambers, as if hastily abandoned on the floor.

to its being in ruins, we may conclude that the city decayed between the fifth and seventh centuries.¹⁷

After visiting Vriji (which he describes as in ruins), and Nepal (which he finds under a Kshatriya king of the race of the Lichavas), he continues his route to Magadha. Here he found 50 convents with 10,000 monks, but the temples were also numerous and well frequented. He mentions Pataliputra as a ruined city south of the Ganges; "though long deserted, its foundations still covered an extent of 70 *li*." He also mentions its original name—Kusumapura, and gives a legend to account for the change. He counted hundreds of ruined convents, *stupas*, and temples in the neighbourhood. Some of the legends connected with the different sacred sites are curious, as illustrating the respective positions of Buddhism and the more ancient faith. We find frequent accounts of great disputations held in the presence of the kings, between the most learned partisans of the two creeds; and one great Brahman is expressly mentioned by name—Madhava—a celebrated follower of the Sankhya philosophy, who was vanquished by a Buddhist teacher—Gunamati—from central India. Madhava, it is said, was a man of immense learning, and he possessed two towns, and all the surrounding district was his appanage. Similarly we read in the legends of towns given as a reward to the successful Buddhist disputant, and in one place (vol. i. p. 451) it is even said that the defeated Brahmans were reduced to be dependants of the convents ("les Brahmanes resterent assujettis au service des couvents").

Among other places, Hiouen Thsang mentions Gaya,¹⁸ which he describes as a well-defended city, very difficult of access; it had only a few inhabitants. The Brahmans formed a thousand families; they were descended from one Rishi. The king did not treat them as subjects, and the multitude showed them profound respect. Gaya was a very sacred spot in Buddhist legend; there Buddha had passed six years of severe penance, and there grew the sacred *bodhi* tree, of which General Cunningham says "that it still exists, though very much decayed; one large stem, with three branches to the westward, is still green, but the other branches are barkless and rotten"; but of course it has been frequently renewed. Hiouen Thsang mentions a celebrated *vihara*, which had been constructed near the tree by a Brahman who was once a worshipper of Maheswara, but who, warned by that deity, had resolved to build the Buddhist convent. This appears to be the same legend as that connected with Amara Sinha, which is commemorated in an

¹⁷ Cf. *supra*.

¹⁸ This is no doubt the so-called Buddha Gaya, as distinguished from the city Gaya, six miles to the north.

inscription found by Wilkins at Gaya, and published in the first volume of the "Asiatic Researches." Hiouen Thsang remarks that "for the space of 10 *li* to the south of the *bodhi* tree, the sacred monuments are so numerous that it would be difficult to mention them all. Every year, when the mendicants (*bhikshus*) inhabit fixed abodes during the rainy season, monks and laymen arrive from all quarters, by hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands. For seven days and nights they walk about in the woods surrounding the convent, with odorous flowers and to the sound of music, and pay their homage to the relics and make their offerings. The monks of India, at the time of the rains, enter fixed habitations on the first day of Sravan, and they quit them on the last day of Aswayuj."¹⁹

Magadha of course abounded with objects of interest to the Chinese pilgrim, and his account of its sacred places is very detailed, and General Cunningham has recognised many of the spots which he visited, especially the ruins of Kusagarapur or Rajagriha, near the modern Rajgir, which can still be identified by Fa-hian's description, that "the five hills form a girdle round it like the walls of a town." This was the capital of the ancient kings of Magadha, and it is no doubt the same as the Girivraja of the Ramayana; even at the time of Fa-hian's visit it was a deserted city.

Hiouen Thsang also notices a more modern Rajagriha, in the plain, which was inhabited by 1,000 Brahman families, Asoka having given it to them when he removed his court to Pataliputra. But the most interesting place which Hiouen Thsang visited was the celebrated convent of Nalanda, the extensive ruins of which still exist in the village of Baragaon, seven miles to the north of Rajgir. On his arrival he was met by 200 monks and a crowd of other persons, coming in procession with flags, parasols, perfumes, and flowers. He was then welcomed in solemn conclave by all the residents, and invited to share in all that the convent supplied. After this he was introduced to a venerable *acharya* named Silabhadra, who was profoundly versed in the depths of Buddhist philosophy, but who, for several years, had been almost helpless from violent rheumatism. Hiouen Thsang was then lodged in one of the convent buildings and treated with every mark of respect. Nalanda was at

¹⁹ Hiouen Thsang remarks (vol. i. p. 493), that "in India, the names of the months are based on those of the asterisms; from ancient times to our days, this usage has been invariably preserved, and the different schools have made no change. But as at the beginning, local expressions were not always well understood, Chinese translators have often been deceived. Hence in the division of the seasons, and the calculations of the months, differences and contradictions have arisen."

that time the most imposing of all the Buddhist monasteries in India : 10,000 monks resided within its walls, and among these were visitors from all parts of India who had come to study the abstruser Buddhist books under its renowned teachers. There were to be found the followers of the eighteen different schools, all living united together ; and every kind of book was studied, "from the common books, as the Vedas and such writings, to logic (*hetuvidya*), grammar (*sabda-vidya*), medicine (*chikitsa*), and the practical arts (*silpa-sthanavidya*)." A thousand of the monks could explain twenty treatises, five hundred could explain thirty, and ten (including Hiouen himself) knew fifty ; but the old acharya had mastered all. The convent was supported by the revenue of 100 villages, and the strictest moral and intellectual discipline was maintained in the community. As the public funds provided all necessities, the monks had no need to wander and beg alms, and all their time was devoted to study.

Hiouen Thsang appears to have remained five years at Nalanda, and during that time he read the *Yoga shastra* three times, the *Nyayanusara shastra* once, the *abhidharma shastra* once, the *hetuvidya shastra* twice, the *sabda-vidya shastra* twice, etc. He also revised the books which he had read in Kashmir, and at the same time he took the opportunity of studying the Brahmanical books and the work entitled *Ki-lun*, which treats of the *Fan* characters of India. There then follows, in the memoirs written by the disciples, a very curious passage on the Sanskrit language and literature, to which we shall return further on.

After leaving Nalanda, he proceeds through forests and mountains to the kingdom of Hiranyaparvata, which is supposed to be Monghir. Its capital contained 10 convents with about 4,000 monks ; there were 20 temples, and all classes of heretics were numerous. He mentions a mountain "whence smoke and vapour issued which obscured the sun and moon" ; which may be an exaggeration of the hot springs found in the neighbouring hills. He thence follows the southern bank of the Ganges and visits Champa, where there were scores of ruined convents, in which about 200 monks still continued to reside ;—the Brahmanical temples were many and well-frequented. He next visits Kajughira (?), with 6 or 7 convents and 10 temples ; the kingdom was no longer independent, and consequently the cities were deserted, and the inhabitants had retired to the villages. He adds that when Siladitya travelled in his dominions, on his arrival in this district, he had a palace built of reeds, where he administered justice, and which was burnt on his departure. Hiouen Thsang mentions that in each of these last-mentioned kingdoms there were large tracts of forest abounding with wild elephants. He next comes to

Pundravardhana (Bardwan?), with 20 convents and 100 temples, and thence proceeds eastward to Kamarupa (Assam). He describes the language of Assam as somewhat different from that of the neighbouring provinces; its inhabitants were not Buddhists, and there was not a single convent within its limits. Its temples could be numbered by hundreds, and their worshippers by tens of thousands. Its king was a Brahman, named Bhaskaravarma, and he bore the title of Kumara; although not a follower of Buddha, he received Hiouen Thsang with kindness and treated him with every mark of respect. He next goes to Samatata (in the Sundarbans?), and thence to the port of Tamralipti (Tamluk). He finds in the latter place 10 convents and 50 temples; and he mentions the immense quantity of rare and precious merchandise which was brought to it by land and sea. Here he enquired about Ceylon (Sinhala), and he learned that ships often sailed thither from this port; but he was advised to proceed southward to the extremity of the Peninsula, and thus avoid the long and dangerous voyage. He accordingly, after first visiting a country called Karnasuvarna (?), proceeds to Orissa; henceforth his descriptions of the different countries are much briefer and more meagre. He describes the inhabitants as tall, dark, and rude in their manners—their language and pronunciation differed from those of central India. There were 100 convents with 10,000 monks, and 50 temples. On the S. E. frontier he finds a large city called Charitra, which was a port greatly frequented by foreign merchants. He next passes through Konyodha (?), with its 100 temples; Kalinga, on the coast, with its 10 convents and 200 temples; and Kosala (in the interior), with its Kshatriya king of the Buddhist faith, its 100 convents and its 70 temples. He next visits Andhra, where he finds a language and pronunciation very different from those of central India, though the written characters are mostly the same. There were 20 convents with 3,000 monks, and 30 temples; he calls its capital Ping-ki-lo (Warangal?).

He then proceeded to Dhanakacheka or Mahandhra (Mahendri?), where he found most of the convents in ruins, and only 20 were still inhabited; there were 100 temples, and heretics of every sect were very numerous. Here he met two learned monks, and he stayed several months to enjoy the benefit of their instructions. Thence he went to Chola, which he describes as mostly a desert covered with marshes and jungles; the convents were nearly all in ruins, but there were many temples, and the heretics who went naked (the *nirgranthas*) were extremely numerous. His way thence lay southward through forests and desert plains until he reached Dravida, and its capital Kanchipura (Conjeveram). He mentions its 100 convents with their 10,000 monks, and its 80 temples, and numerous *nirgrantha*

heretics. Here he meets some monks from Ceylon, who dissuade him from proceeding thither, as the king of that island had lately died, and the country was disturbed by civil commotions: Hiouen Thsang takes their advice, but he inserts in his *Si-yu-ki* a short account of Ceylon, as derived from the travellers whom he met.

According to the *Memoirs*, Hiouen Thsang did not go farther south than Kanchipura; but the *Si-yu-ki* mentions his going 3,000 *li* to the south (or rather south-west), and reaching a country called Mo-lo-kiu-tcha, i.e. Malakuta or Malaya. He describes its inhabitants as illiterate and entirely devoted to gain; the convents were mostly in ruins, but there were hundreds of flourishing temples, and numbers of *nirgrantha* heretics. He describes the Malaya hills and the sandal-trees which grow on them, and he mentions the serpents by which these trees are infested. He then passes through Konkana, where he found 100 convents with 10,000 monks, as well as hundreds of temples. Both in his journey to this kingdom from the south, and again on his leaving it and proceeding northward, he describes himself as passing through vast forests and desert plains infested by wild beasts and robbers. He next comes to Maharashtra. His account of this kingdom is curious and interesting. "The kingdom of Mo-ho-la-tcha (Maharashtra) has a circuit of about 6,000 *li*. On the west side, its capital²⁰ is near a great river—its circumference is 30 *li*. The soil is rich and fertile, and produces grain in abundance. The climate is hot—the manners of the people are simple and honest. They are tall in stature, and their character proud and haughty. Whoever confers a benefit on them may count on their gratitude; but he who offends them never escapes their vengeance. If any one insults them, they risk their life to wash out the affront; if any one implores their aid in distress, they neglect all care of their personal safety to help him. When they have an injury to avenge, they never fail to warn their enemy beforehand; after which, each man dons his cuirass and fights, lance in hand. In a battle they pursue those who fly, but they do not kill those who yield themselves prisoners. When a general has lost a battle, instead of inflicting corporal punishment upon him, they make him wear women's clothes, and so drive him to commit suicide. The State maintains a body of intrepid warriors to the number of many hundreds. Whenever they prepare for combat, they make themselves drunk with wine, and then any one of them would, lance in hand, singly defy ten thousand enemies. If he kills any one who happens to cross his path, the law does not punish him. When the army is out on service, these warriors march in the van, to the sound of drums. They also make drunk hundreds of their ferocious elephants." He describes the king as a Kshatriya

²⁰ *Deogiri or Paithan?*

named Pulakesa, and he adds that Siladitya, the king of Kanouj, had subdued all India except this nation, and all his efforts to conquer them had failed. Hiouen Thsang mentions 100 convents with 5,000 monks; there were also 100 temples, and the heretics of different sects were extremely numerous.

He then crosses the Narmada (Nerbadda) river, and comes to the kingdom of Barugacheva (Barygaza or Baroch). He describes the inhabitants as devoted to maritime traffic, and as illiterate and deceitful. There were 10 convents with 300 monks, and also ten temples. He next goes to Malwa, of which he speaks in glowing terms. "In the five Indias, there are two kingdoms where study is highly esteemed—Malwa in the south-west, and Magadha in the north-east." Brahmanism and Buddhism seemed each to flourish. Thus there were many hundreds of convents with 20,000 monks, and there were also as many temples. The heretics were very numerous, especially those who rubbed their bodies with ashes (the Pasupatas). He mentions a king named Siladitya, who had reigned some 60 years before and had greatly patronised the Buddhists during his long reign of 50 years; he places the capital on the south-east of the river Mahi, which seems to indicate Dhara. He also mentions a city of Brahmans, and gives a curious legend of a Brahman who was deeply versed in every branch of learning, sacred and profane, and in his arrogance proclaimed himself the successor of Buddha and the guide of the ignorant. He had statues carved in red sandalwood of Maheswara, Vasudeva,²¹ Narayana, and Buddha, and he placed these as the four legs of his chair, until he was defeated in a public disputation by a Buddhist mendicant, when he was swallowed up alive by the earth opening under his feet.

He next visits Atali (?) and Kach, in both of which Buddhism was yielding to Brahmanism, and from thence he proceeds to Vallabhi. He describes the latter as a kingdom of great commerce and wealth; there were 100 convents with 6,000 monks, and also many hundreds of temples and heretics of every sect. The kings were Kshatriyas and nephews of the Siladitya who was mentioned above as a king of Malwa; the present occupier of the throne, Dhruvapatu, who was also son-in-law to the son of Siladitya, the king of Kanouj. He was a zealous Buddhist, and every year held a great assembly for seven days, when he distributed all kinds of gifts to the religious devotees, and then bought them back at a double price.

²¹ So in Julien, but probably Vasudeva, i.e., Krishna. This is the only allusion to Krishna which I have noticed in the travels. Vishnu is mentioned under the form of Narayana, but most of the temples described are those of Maheswara (Siva).

He next visits Anandapura, a dependency of Malwa—Surashtra, a dependency of Vallabhi, which possessed great wealth from its commerce—and Gurjara,²² where there was only one convent, though the Kshatriya king professed the Buddhist faith. We next find him at Ujain, which he describes as under a Brahman king well versed in heretical learning—here there had once been scores of convents, but now nearly all were in ruins, while the temples were numerous and crowded with votaries²³. Next he visits Tchi-ki-to (Chitor ?), where Buddhism was similarly waning before Brahmanism; but the king, though a Brahman, patronizes the former religion—and Maheswarapura, a thoroughly Brahmanical kingdom, which seems to have lain in the north-east of Rajputana. He then turns westward, and after travelling through wild plains and dangerous deserts, he crosses the river Sindhu and arrives at a kingdom of the same name. He calls the capital Vichavapura (?); the king is a Sudra; there are hundreds of convents with 10,000 monks, and there are also 30 temples. He mentions a sect of fanatics who occupied one side of the river for 1,000 *li*; their only profession was murder and the tending of oxen: the men shaved their beards and the women their hair, and they wore the dress of Buddhist monks. Hiouen Thsang regarded them as the degenerate descendants of a Buddhist tribe. He next visits Mulasambhuru (Multan?), where there were 10 convents, mostly in ruins, and 8 temples, one of which, that of the Sun, was of unusual splendour. The statue of the god was of pure gold, and the temple, from its first founding, had never ceased to resound with continual music, and it was always lighted up brilliantly at night. After visiting Parvata, a dependency of Cheka, we next find him at Adhyavakila (?), with its capital Khajiswara (Karachi?), which he calls a dependency of Sindh; here he notices 80 convents and 10 temples; among the latter he specifies a magnificent temple of Maheswara, and he particularly mentions the number of its devotees

²² *This appears to be not Guzerat, but some territory near Marwar; but in these latter chapters Hiouen Thsang's distances are frequently confused and erroneous, which renders it very difficult to trace his route.*

²³ *It is curious that Bhavabhuti (who is supposed to have flourished about A.D. 720) places the scene of his Malati-Madhava in Ujain, and one peculiarity of that play is "the licensed existence of Bauddha ascetics, their access to the great, and their employment as teachers of science." (Wilson's Hindu Theatre, ii. p. 4). Although this favourable position of Buddhism could hardly have been actually found existing just then in Ujain, it certainly was true of most of India at that time, and its mention by Bhavabhuti is a strong confirmation of his supposed date.*

who rub themselves with ashes (Pasupatas). He next visits Langala, a dependency of Persia,—where he finds the language somewhat different from those of India, but the written characters were very similar. Here there were 100 convents and also many hundreds of temples, and he again particularizes one of Maheswara with its Pasupata devotees. He then visits the unknown kingdoms of Pitasila, Avanda, and Varana; in each he finds convents and temples, and Pasupata devotees as well as Buddhist monks, but in Varana most of the convents were in ruins. After this he climbs a high mountain range, and leaves the boundaries of India behind him.

The remainder of his route we need only just indicate. He visits Ho-si-na (Ghazni?), crosses the Hindu Kush, and comes to Anderab. He then ascends the valleys of the affluents of the upper part of the Oxus, as far as the snowy range which separates the basin of that river from that of the river of Yarkand. Thus he passes through Khost, Bolor, Badakhshan, Pamir, Kashgar, Khotan, Tukhara and the desert of Makhai, and reaches China in the spring of 645.

During Hiouen Thsang's stay at Kanouj and Nalanda he had many disputes with the learned Brahmans belonging to the various philosophical schools, especially the Sankhya and Vaiseshika; and we have some very curious accounts of some conferences, where the partisans of the rival religions met and discussed their different doctrines, and where, of course, "the master of the law" (to quote Hiouen Thsang's Chinese title of honour) plays a very prominent part, especially in the debates between the two great Buddhist sects who respectively called themselves the followers of "the greater" or "less translation" (*maha- and hina-yana*).²⁴ Hiouen Thsang himself gives an account of one of these great convocations. Twenty-one tributary kings, attended by the most learned Brahman and Buddhist teachers in their several kingdoms, were present. A monastery, and a tower 100 feet high, had been erected on the south bank of the Ganges, in honour of a golden statue of Buddha. The king had a temporary palace built some three miles from the spot, and every day while the assembly lasted he escorted the statue in a grand triumphal procession from the palace to the tower, and, after various ceremonies in its honour, carried it back in the evening with the same pomp. After a sumptuous banquet, before the procession returned, a disputation was held every day between the different

²⁴ *There is some confusion here between the disciples' memoirs and the Si-yu-ki. The former make Hiouen Thsang return for a second visit to Nalanda, after he has reached Sindh and the Panjab, and they describe the second visit as the more important one; but the latter, by its silence, proves the erroneousness of the double journey.*

learned visitors, when "they discussed the most abstract expressions and the most sublime principles." Of course the Brahmans are defeated. On the last day of the assembly, the great tower suddenly caught fire, and at the same time an attempt was made to assassinate the king. The assassin, on examination, confessed that he had been employed by the defeated disputants, and that it was they also who had been the incendiaries. He adds that "the king punished the chiefs of the conspiracy, and banished 500 of the Brahmans beyond the frontiers of India." The memoir-writers give an account of a somewhat similar assembly held by the same king at Prayaga, at the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges: 500,000 monks and laymen were present, and the festivities appear to have lasted ten weeks. It is a curious illustration of the religious condition of Northern India at that time, to find, on the first day, the installation of a statue of Buddha; on the second, that of an image of the Sun; and on the third, that of an image of Iswara;²⁵ and similarly we read that the king lavished his gifts on the Brahmans and the different heretics (especially the Nirgranthas), as well as on the Buddhist monks.

The first part of the second book of the Si-yu-ki gives a general account of India. The author says that the name should be pronounced In-tou, and he derives it from the Sanskrit *indu* "the moon"; but he also mentions the name "kingdom of the Brahmans," which may mean Brahnavarta.²⁶ He gives some curious details respecting the public buildings, the household furniture, dresses, manners, divisions of time, etc.; and he seems to have been particularly struck with the minute observances of caste. He mentions the four castes, and describes the Vaisyas as merchants, and the Sudras as agricultural labourers; he also notices that there were numerous mixed castes. Like the Greeks, he was very favourably impressed with the truthfulness and honesty of the national character. He praises the administration of justice, and he mentions four modes of ordeal. The produce of the royal lands was divided into four portions: the first went to pay the expenses of the kingdom; the second supplied the fiefs (i.e. jagirs) for the officers of state; the third was given to learned men; and the fourth was expended in gifts to the Buddhist and the various Brahmanical sects. He describes the taxes as light. Every one possessed and cultivated some hereditary land, and paid a sixth part of the produce to the king, who advanced the seed. There were transit duties at the fords of rivers and on the highways, and the king possessed no right of forced labour, but

²⁵ In his account of Kanouj, Hiouen Thsang mentions two temples of blue stone dedicated to the Sun and Maheswara, each of which had 1,000 attendants, and resounded incessantly with song and drums.

²⁶ He says that India is divided into 70 kingdoms.

was obliged to pay reasonable wages. There was a small standing army employed in guarding the frontiers and the king's person ; the rest was levied in time of need. The governors, ministers, and magistrates all received a certain portion of land, and were supported by its produce.

He also gives some curious details respecting the current literature. He particularly mentions five sciences—that of sounds or words (*sabda-vidya*) : that of arts and trades (*silpasthana-vidya*) ; that of medicine (*chikitsa-vidya*) ; that of reasons (*hetu-vidya*) ; and that of metaphysics (*adhyatma-vidya*). He describes the four Vedas, though confusedly, and he expressly mentions that the teachers thoroughly knew these works, and taught the general sense to their pupils, and explained the obscure expressions. The term of education lasted till the student was thirty years of age. He has a short chapter on the eighteen different philosophical schools :—"they are constantly at strife, and the noise of their angry discussions rises like the waves of the sea." There is one remarkable passage which to the Sanskrit scholar may well seem inexplicable :—"Special functionaries are charged with the duty of consigning to writing memorable sayings, and others are appointed to write the narrative of events. The record of annals and royal edicts is called Nilapita—'the blue collection.' In these narratives are mentioned the good and evil events, the calamities, and also the auspicious presages."²⁷ Probably these were worthless records of prodigies and omens like those quoted by Livy ; but it is curious that every trace of them should have vanished from India with Buddhism itself.

But the most interesting of all these sidelights thrown on the state of literature in Northern India is that given by the account, in the disciples' memoirs, of Hiouen Thsang's studies during his stay at Nalanda. It is there said that, besides the different Buddhist shastras which he studied under the renowned teachers of the monastery, he also studied the books of the Brahmans, and especially the work entitled Ki-lun, which treats of the Fan characters of India, the origin of which is lost in antiquity and none knows who invented them. At the commencement of the Kalpas, the king Fan (Brahma) first explained them and transmitted them to gods and men. As these characters were explained by Brahma, they were for that reason called "the writing of Brahma."²⁸ The primitive text was very long, extending to a million slokas,—this is the work called Pi-ye-kie-la-nan (*Vyakaranam*), which means a mnemonic treatise for the knowledge of sounds. This immense work was successively abridged by Indra in 100,000 slokas, and by a Brahman of Gandhara in the north of

²⁷ *Si-yu-ki*, vol. i. p. 72.

²⁸ *Hiouen Thsang* says there were 47 of these letters.

India, named the rishi Po-no-ni.²⁹ The latter reduced it to 8,000 slokas, and "it is this work which is still in use in India."

He then proceeds to give a curious account of this work, which can be no other than the celebrated Ashtaka of Panini. It embraces, he says, two classes of words, *ti-yen-to* and *sou-man-to*, which correspond, no doubt, to the *tin-anta* and *sup-anta* (or verbs and nouns) of Hindu grammarians. The former have 18 terminations, which are divided into *Parasmaipada* and *Atmanepada*; there are three numbers with 3 persons in each, which thus raises the sum total of terminations to 18 (Pan 3, 4, 78). He then adds the example of the root *bhu*, and it is very interesting to see this familiar verb in its strange Chinese disguise.

"If they wish to express 'existence,' this word has three forms :

1. *Po-po-ti* (*bhavati*) 'he is,'
2. *Po-po-pa* (*bhavatah?*) 'they two are,'
3. *Po-fan-ti* (*bhavanti*) 'they are'";

and similarly we have the forms for the second and first persons, *po-po-see*, *po-po-po*, and *po-po-ta*, and *po-po-mi*, *po-po-hoa*, *po-po-mo*.³⁰ He adds that words of this class are employed in elegant treatises, but are rarely used in ordinary composition—a remark which perhaps alludes to the corrupt *gatha* Sanskrit which we find so often in Buddhist books.

He gives a similar analysis of the noun (*sup-anta*), and, as an example, we have a complete declension of *Pou-lou-cha* (*Purusha*), "a man."

Such is a brief outline of this interesting narrative, the importance of which, for a view of mediaeval India, can hardly be overrated. Had the "Hindu period" been historical, the travels of Fa-hian and Hiouen Thsang would have only merited a passing notice, just like that given to Ibn Batuta or Bernier in the Muhammadan portion; but, in the present dearth of historical materials, these foreign visits assume an entirely new importance—they are almost our only stepping-stones through a thousand years of fable.

²⁹ Cf. Sayana's *Introd. Rig Veda*.

³⁰ The Chinese author remarks on this form (which corresponds to *bhavamasi*) that in the Vedas another form often occurs, *po-po-mo-sse*, which is no doubt the Vaidik *bhavamasi* (Pan. 7, 1. 46), and we have thus a singular proof that Hiouen Thsang did actually study the Vedas.

CHAPTER IX
THE GREEKS IN INDIA
327 to 161 B. C.

BY SIR W. W. HUNTER

External sources of the history of India : Early Greek
writers, 549-401 B.C.

The External History of India commences for us with the Greek invasion in 327 B.C. Some indirect trade between India and the Mediterranean seems to have existed from very ancient times. Homer was acquainted with tin,¹ and other articles of Indian merchandise, by their Sanskrit names ; and a list has been made of Indian products mentioned in the Bible.² The ship captains of Solomon and Hiram not only brought Indian apes, peacocks, and sandal-wood to Palestine ; they also brought their Sanskrit names.³ This was about 1000 B.C. The Assyrian monuments show that the rhinoceros and elephant were among the tribute offered to Shalmaneser II. (859-823 B.C.)⁴ But the first Greek historian who speaks clearly of India is Hekataios of Miletos (549-486 B.C.) ; the knowledge of Herodotos (450 B.C.) ended at the Indus ; and Ktesias, the physician (401 B.C.), brought back from his residence in Persia only a few facts about the products of India, its dyes and fabrics, monkeys and parrots. India to the east of the Indus was first made known to Europe by the historians and men of science who accompanied Alexander the Great in 327 B.C. Their narratives, although now lost, furnished materials to Strabo, Pliny, and Arrian. Soon afterwards, Megasthenes, as Greek ambassador resident at a court in the centre

¹ Greek, *Kassiteros* ; Sanskrit, *Kastira* ; hence, the *Kassiterides*, the Tin or Scilly Islands. *Elephas*, ivory, through the Arabian elephant (from Arabic *el*, the, and Sanskrit *ibha*, domestic elephant), is also cited.

² Sir G. Birdwood's scholarly *Handbook to the British Indian Section of the Paris Exhibition of 1878*, pp. 22-35. For economic intercourse with ancient India, see Del Mar's *History of Money in Ancient Countries*, chaps. iv. and v. (1885).

³ Hebrew, *Kophim*, *tukijim*, *almugim* = Sanskrit, *kapi*, *sikhi*, *valgukam*.

⁴ Max Duncker's *Ancient History of India*, p. 13 (ed. 1881).

of Bengal (306-298 B.C.), had opportunities for the closest observation. The knowledge of the Greeks concerning India practically dates from his researches, 300 B.C.⁵

ALEXANDER'S EXPEDITION, 327-325 B.C.

Alexander the Great entered India early in 327 B.C. ; crossed the Indus above Attock, and advanced, without a struggle, over the intervening territory of the Taxiles⁶ to the Jehlam (Jhelum) (Hydaspes). He found the Punjab divided into petty kingdoms jealous of each other, and many of them inclined to join an invader rather than to oppose him. One of these local monarchs, Porus, disputed the passage of the Jehlam with a force which, substituting chariots for guns, about equalled the army of Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Punjab in the present century.⁷ Plutarch gives a vivid description of the battle from

⁵ *The fragments of the Indika of Megasthenes, collected by Dr. Schwanbeck, with the first part of the Indika of Arrian ; the Periplus Maris Erythræi, with Arrian's account of the voyage of Nearkhos ; the Indika of Ktesias ; and Ptolemy's chapters relating to India, have been edited in four volumes with prolegomena by J. W. McCrindle, M.A. (Trubner, 1877, 1879, 1882, and 1885). They originally appeared in the "Indian Antiquary," to which this volume is much indebted. A new and important work by McCrindle is promised shortly (1892), by Constable & Co., under the title of "The Invasion of India" by Alexander the Great. General Cunningham's "Ancient Geography of India," with its maps, and his Reports of the Archaeological Survey, Vincent's "Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients" (2 vols. 4to, 1807), and the series of maps, on an unfortunately small scale, in General-Lieutenant von Spruner's Historisch-Geographischen Atlas (Gotha), have also been used for this chapter.*

⁶ *The Takkas, a Turanian race, the earliest inhabitants of RAWAL PINDI DISTRICT. They gave their name to the town of Takshasila, or Taxila, which Alexander found 'a rich and populous city, the largest between the Indus and Hydaspes,' indentified with the ruins of DERI SHAHAN. Taki or Asarur, on the road between Lahore and Pindi Bhatian, was the capital of the Punjab in 633 A.D. When names are printed in small capitals, the object is to refer the reader to the fuller information given in The Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

⁷ *Namely, '30,000 efficient infantry ; 4000 horse ; 300 chariots ; 200 elephants' [Cowell]. The Greeks probably exaggerated the numbers of the enemy. Alexander's army numbered 'about 50,000, including 5000 Indian auxiliaries under Mophis of Taxila.'—General Cunningham, Anc. Geog. of India, p. 172. See his lucid account of the battle, with an excellent map, pp. 159-177, ed., 1871.*

Alexander's own letters. Having drawn up his troops at a bend of the Jehlam, about 14 miles west of the modern field of Chilianwala,⁸ the Greek general crossed under cover of a tempestuous night. The chariots hurried out by Porus stuck in the muddy margin of the river. In the engagement which followed, the elephants of the Indian prince refused to face the Greeks, and, wheeling round, trampled his own army under foot. His son fell early in the onset; Porus himself fled wounded; but, on tendering his submission, he was confirmed in his kingdom, and became the conqueror's trusted friend. Alexander built two memorial cities on the scene of his victory, —Bucephala on the west bank, near the modern Jalalpur, named after his beloved charger, Bucephalus, slain in the battle; and Nikaia, the present Mong, on the east side of the river.

ALEXANDER IN THE PUNJAB, 327-326 B.C.

Alexander advanced south-east through the kingdom of the younger Porus to Amritsar, and, after a sharp bend backward to the west, to fight the Kathaei at Sangala, he reached the Beas (Hyphasis). Here, at a spot not far from the modern battle-field of Sobraon, he halted his victorious standards.⁹ He had resolved to march to the Ganges; but his troops were worn out by the heats of the Punjab summer, and their spirits broken by the hurricanes of the south-west monsoon. The native tribes had already risen in his rear, and the Conqueror of the World was forced to turn back, before he had crossed even the frontier Province of India. The Sutlej, the eastern Districts of the Punjab, and the mighty Jumna, still lay between him and the Ganges. A single defeat might have been fatal to his army; if the battle on the Jehlam had gone against him, not a Greek would probably have reached the Afghan side of the passes. Yielding at length to the clamour of his men, he led them back from the Beas to the Jehlam. He there embarked 8000 of his troops in boats previously prepared, and floated them down the river; the remainder marched in two divisions along the banks.

ALEXANDER IN SIND, 325 B.C.

The country was hostile, and the Greeks held only the land on which they encamped. At Multan, then as now the capital

⁸ *And about 30 miles south-west of Jehlam town.*

⁹ *The change in the course of the Sutlej has altered its old position relative to the Beas at this point. The best small map of Alexander's route is No. v. in General Cunningham's *Anc. Geog. of India*, p. 104, ed., 1871.*

of the Southern Punjab, Alexander had to fight a pitched battle with the Malli, and was severely wounded in taking the city. His enraged troops put every soul within it to the sword. Farther down, near the confluence of the five rivers of the Punjab, he made a long halt, built a town,—Alexandria, the modern Uchh,—and received the submission of the neighbouring States. A Greek garrison and Satrap, whom he here left behind, laid the foundation of a more lasting influence. Having constructed a new fleet, suitable for the greater rivers on which he was now to embark, he proceeded southward through Sind, and followed the course of the Indus until he reached the ocean. In the apex of the delta he founded or refounded a city—Patala—which survives to this day as Haidarabad, the native capital of Sind.¹⁰ At the mouth of the Indus, Alexander beheld for the first time the majestic phenomenon of the tides. One part of his army he shipped off under the command of Nearkhos to coast along the Persian Gulf; the other he himself led through Southern Baluchistan and Persia to Susa, where, after terrible losses from want of water and famine on the march, he arrived in 325 B.C.¹¹

RESULTS OF GREEK EXPEDITION, 327-325 B.C.

During his two years' campaign in the Punjab and Sind, Alexander captured no province, but he made alliances, founded cities, and planted Greek garrisons. He had transferred much territory from the tribes whom he had half-subdued, to the chiefs and confederations who were devoted to his cause. Every petty court had its Greek faction; and the detachments which he left behind at various positions from the Afghan frontier to the Beas, and from near the base of the Himalayas to the Sind delta, were visible pledges of his return. At Taxila

¹⁰ For its interesting appearances in ancient history, see General Cunningham's *Anc. Geog. of India*, pp. 279-287, under Patala or Nirankot. It appears variously as Pattala, Pattalene, Pitasila, etc. It was formerly identified with Tatta (Thatha), near to where the western arm of the Indus bifurcates. See also M'Crindle's *Commerce and Navigation of the Erythræan Sea*, p. 156 (Trubner, 1879). An excellent map of Alexander's campaign in Sind is given at p. 248 of Cunningham's *Anc. Geog. of India*.

¹¹ The stages down the Indus and along the Persian coast, with the geographical features and incidents of Nearkhos' "Voyage," are given in the second part of the *Indika* of Arrian, chapter xviii. to the end. The river stages and details are of value to the student of the modern delta of the Indus.—M'Crindle's *Commerce and Navigation of the Erythræan Sea*, pp. 153-224 (1879).

(Deri-Shahan) and Nikaia (Mong) in the Northern Punjab ; at Alexandria (Uchh) in the Southern Punjab ; at Patala (Haidarabad) in Sind ; and at other points along his route, he established military settlements of Greeks or their allies. A body of his troops remained in Bactria. In the partition of the Empire after Alexander's death in 323 B.C., Bactria and India eventually fell to Seleukos Nikator, the founder of the Syrian monarchy. (323-312 B.C.).

CHANDRA GUPTA, 326 B.C.

Meanwhile, a new power had arisen in India. Among the Indian adventurers who thronged Alexander's camp in the Punjab, each with his plot for winning a kingdom or crushing a rival, Chandra Gupta, an exile from the Gangetic valley, is said to have played a part. According to a doubtful story, he tried to tempt the wearied Greeks on the Beas with schemes of conquest in the rich south-eastern Provinces ; but, having personally offended Alexander, he had to fly the camp (326 B.C.). In the confused years which followed, he managed, with the aid of plundering hordes, to found a kingdom on the ruins of the Nanda dynasty in Magadha, or Behar (316 B.C.).¹² He seized their capital Pataliputra, the modern Patna ; established himself firmly in the Gangetic valley, and compelled the Punjab principalities, Greek and native alike, to acknowledge his suzerainty.¹³ While, therefore, Seleukos Nikator was winning his way to the Syrian monarchy during the eleven years which followed Alexander's death, Chandra Gupta was building up an empire in Northern India. Seleukos reigned in Syria from 312 to 280 B.C. ; Chandra Gupta in the Gangetic valley from 316 to 292 B.C. In 312 B.C., the power of both had been consolidated, and the two new sovereignties were soon brought face to face.

SELEUKOS IN INDIA, 312-306 B.C.

About that year, Seleukos, having recovered Babylon, proceeded to re-establish his authority in Bactria and the Punjab. In the Punjab he found Greek influence decayed. Alexander had left a mixed force of Greeks and Indians at Taxila. But no sooner had he departed from India, than the Indians rose and slew the Greek governor. The Macedonians next massacred the Indians. A new governor, sent by Alexander, murdered the friendly Punjab prince, Porus ; and was himself driven out of India by the advance of Chandra Gupta from the Gangetic

¹² *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, i. 7. *Jacobi's Jaina Sutras*, xliii.

¹³ *For the dynasty of Chandra Gupta, see Numismata Orientalia (Ceylon fasciculus), pp. 41-50.*

valley. Seleukos, after a war with Chandra Gupta, determined to ally himself with the new power in India rather than to oppose it. In return for 500 elephants, he ceded to the Indian king the Greek settlements in the Punjab and the Kabul valley; gave his daughter to Chandra Gupta in marriage; and stationed an ambassador, Megasthenes, at the Gangetic court (306-298 B.C.). Chandra Gupta became familiar to the Greeks as Sandroktotos, King of the Prasii and Gangaridæ; his capital, Pataliputra,¹⁴ or Patna, was rendered into Palimbothra. On the other hand, the Greeks and kings of Grecian dynasties appear in the rock inscriptions under Indian forms.¹⁵

THE INDIA OF MEGASTHENES, 300 B.C.

Megasthenes has left a lifelike picture of the Indian people. Notwithstanding some striking errors, the observations which he jotted down at Patna, three hundred years before Christ, give as accurate an account of the social organization in the Gangetic valley as any which existed when the Bengal Asiatic Society commenced its labours at the end of the last century (1784). Up to the time of Megasthenes, the Greek idea of India was a very vague one. Their historians had spoken of two classes of Indians,—certain mountainous tribes who dwelt in Northern Afghanistan under the Caucasus or Hindu Kush, and a maritime race living on the coast of Baluchistan. Of the India of modern geography lying beyond the Indus, they practically knew nothing. It was this India to the east of the Indus which Megasthenes opened up to the Western world.

HIS SEVEN CLASSES OF THE PEOPLE

He describes the classification of the people, dividing them, however, into seven castes instead of four,¹⁶—namely, philosophers, husbandmen, shepherds, artisans, soldiers, inspectors, and the counsellors of the king. The philosophers were the

¹⁴ *The modern Patna, or Pattana, means simply 'the city.' For its identification with Pataliputra by means of Ravenshaw's final discoveries, see General Cunningham's Anc. Geog. of India, p. 452 et seq.*

¹⁵ *The Greeks as Yonas (Yavanas), from the 'laoves or Ionians. In the Inscriptions of Asoka, five Greek princes appear: Antiochus (of Syria); Ptolemy (Philadelphos of Egypt); Antigonos (Gonatos of Macedon); Magas (of Kyrene); Alexander (II. of Epirus).—Weber, Hist. Ind. Lit., pp. 179, 252. But see also Wilson, Journ. Roy. As. Soc. vol. xii. (1850); and Cunningham's Corpus Inscript. Indic. pp. 125, 126.*

¹⁶ *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, being fragments of the Indika, by J. W. M'Crindle, M.A., p. 40, ed., 1877.*

Brahmans, and the prescribed stages of their life are indicated. Megasthenes draws a distinction between the Brahmans (Brachmanes) and the Sarmanai, from which some scholars infer that the Buddhist Sramanas or monks were a recognised order 300 B.C., or fifty years before the Council of Asoka. But the Sarmanai might also include Brahmans in the first and third stages of their life as students and forest recluses.¹⁷ The inspectors,¹⁸ or sixth class of Megasthenes, have been identified with the Buddhist supervisors of morals, afterwards referred to in the sixth edict of Asoka. Arrian's name for them, 'episkopoi,' is the Greek word which has become our modern Bishop, or overseer of souls.

'ERRORS' OF MEGASTHENES

It must be borne in mind that Indian society, as seen by Megasthenes, was not the artificial structure described in Manu, with its rigid lines and four sharply demarcated castes. It was the actual society of the court, the camp, and the capital, at a time when Buddhist ideals were conflicting with Brahmanical types. Some of the so-called errors of Megasthenes have been imputed to him from a want of due appreciation of this fact. Others have been proved by modern inquiry to be no errors at all. The knowledge of India derived by the Greeks chiefly, although by no means exclusively, from Megasthenes, includes details which were scarcely known to Europeans in the last century. The Aryan and Aboriginal elements of the population, or the White and Dark Indians; the two great harvests of the year, in spring and autumn; the salt-mines; the land-making silt brought down by the rivers from the Himalayas; the great changes in the river-courses; and even a fairly accurate measurement of the Indian peninsula—were among the points known to the Greek writers.

THE OLD INDIAN RIVERS

From those sources, the present writer, when engaged on the Statistical Survey of India, derived pregnant hints in regard to the changes in the physical configuration of the country during the past 22 centuries. The account which Megasthenes gives of the size of the Indus and its lakes, points to the same conclusion as that reached by the most recent observations, in regard to the Indian rivers being originally lines of drainage

¹⁷ *Brahmacharins and Vanaprastha (Hulo-bioi)*. Weber very properly declines to identify the Sarmanai exclusively with the Buddhist Sramanas.—*Hist. Ind. Lit.* p. 28, ed., 1878.

¹⁸ *The Epheroi (Diodorus, Strabo), Episkopoi (Arrian)*.

through great watery regions. In their upper courses they gradually scooped out their beds, and thus produced a low-level channel into which the fens and marshes eventually drained. In their lower courses they conducted their great operations of land-making from the silt which their currents had brought down from above. In regard to the action of the rivers and their magnitude, as in several other matters, the 'exaggerations' of Megasthenes are proved to be nearer the truth than was suspected even by English writers until the Statistical Survey began its work in 1871.

The Brahmans deeply impressed Alexander by their learning and austerities. One of them, Kalanos by name, was tempted, notwithstanding the reproaches of his brethren, to enter the service of the conqueror. But, falling sick in Persia, Kalanos determined to die like a Brahman, although he had not consistently lived as one. Alexander, on hearing of the philosopher's resolve to put an end to his life, vainly tried to dissuade him ; then loaded him with jewels, and directed that he should be attended with all honours to the last scene. Distributing the costly gifts of his master as he advanced, wearing a garland of flowers, and singing his native Indian hymns, the Brahman mounted a funeral pile, and serenely perished in the flames. (323 B.C.).

The Greek ambassador observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, the chastity of the women, and the courage of the men. In valour they excelled all other Asiatics ; they required no locks to their doors ; above all, no Indian was ever known to tell a lie. Sober and industrious, good farmers and skilful artisans, they scarcely ever had recourse to a lawsuit, and lived peaceably under their native chiefs. The kingly government is portrayed almost as described in Manu, with its hereditary castes of councillors and soldiers. Megasthenes mentions that India was divided into 118 kingdoms ; some of which, such as that of the Prasii under Chandra Gupta, exercised suzerain powers. The village system is well described, each little rural unit seeming to the Greek an independent republic. Megasthenes remarked the exemption of the husbandmen (Vaisyas) from war and public services ; and enumerates the dyes, fibres, fabrics, and products (animal, vegetable, and mineral) of India. Husbandry depended on the periodical rains ; and forecasts of the weather, with a view to 'make adequate provision against a coming deficiency,' formed a special duty of the Brahmans. But mark the judicious proviso : 'The philosopher who errs in his predictions observes silence for the rest of his life.'

Before the year 300 B.C., two powerful monarchies had thus begun to act upon the Brahmanism of Northern India, from the east and from the west. On the east, in the Gangetic valley, Chandra Gupta (316-292 B.C.) firmly consolidated the dynasty which during the next century produced Asoka (264-223 B.C.), established Buddhism throughout India, and spread its doctrines from Afghanistan to China, and from Central Asia to Ceylon. On the west, the heritage of Seleukos (312-280 B.C.) diffused Greek influences, and sent forth Græco-Bactrian expeditions to the Punjab. Antiochos Theos (grandson of Seleukos Nikator) and Asoka (grandson of Chandra Gupta), who ruled these probably conterminous monarchies, made a treaty with each other, 256 B.C. In the next century, Eukratides, King of Bactria, conquered as far as Alexander's royal city of Patala, the modern Haidarabad in the Sind delta ; and sent expeditions into Cutch and Gujarat, 181-161 B.C. Menander advanced farther into North-Western India, and his coins are found from Kabul, near which he probably had his capital, as far as Muttra on the Jumna. The Buddhist successors of Chandra Gupta profoundly modified the religion of Northern India from the east of the Gangetic valley ; the Greek empire of Seleukos, with its Bactrian and later offshoots, deeply influenced the science and art of Hindustan from the west.

We have already seen how much Brahman astronomy owed to the Greeks, and how the builders' art in India received its first impulse from the architectural exigencies of Buddhism. The same double influence, of the Greeks on the west and of the Buddhists on the east of the Brahmanical Middle Land of Bengal, can be traced in many details. What the Buddhists were to the architecture of Northern India, that the Greeks were to its sculpture. Greek faces and profiles constantly occur in ancient Buddhist statuary. They enrich almost all the larger museums in India, and examples may be seen at South Kensington. The purest specimens have been found in the Punjab, where the Greeks settled in greatest force. In the Lahore collection I saw, among other beautiful pieces, an exquisite little figure of an old blind man feeling his way with a staff. Its subdued pathos, its fidelity to nature, and its living movement dramatically held for the moment in sculptured suspense, are Greek, and nothing but Greek. It is human misfortune, that has culminated in wandering poverty, age, and blindness—the very curse which Sophocles makes the spurned Teiresias throw back upon the doomed king—

‘Blind, having seen ;
 Poor, having rolled in wealth ; he with a staff
 Feeling his way to a strange land shall go.’

As we proceed eastward from the Punjab, the Greek type begins to fade. Purity of outline gives place to lusciousness of form. In the female figures, the artists trust more and more to swelling breasts and towering chignons, and load the neck with constantly-accumulating jewels. Nevertheless, the Grecian type of countenance long survived in Indian art. It is perfectly unlike the coarse, conventional ideal of beauty in modern Hindu sculptures. I have traced this Greek type southward as late as the delicate profiles on the so-called Sun Temple or ‘Black Pagoda’ at Konarak, built in the 12th century A.D. on the far eastern Orissa shore of the Bay of Bengal.

Not only did the Greek impulse become fainter and fainter in Indian sculpture with the lapse of time, but that impulse itself was gradually derived from less pure and less vigorous sources. The Greek ideal of beauty may possibly have been brought direct to India by the officers and artists of Alexander the Great. But it was from Græco-Bactria, not from Greece itself, that the practical masters of Greek sculpture came to the Punjab. Indeed, important evidence has been collected to show that the most prolific stream of such artistic inspirations reached India from the Roman Empire, and in Imperial times, rather than through even the indirect Grecian channels represented by the Bactrian kingdom.

It must suffice here to indicate the ethnical and dynastic influences thus brought to bear upon India, without pausing to assign dates to the individual monarchs. The chronology of the twelve centuries intervening between the Græco-Bactrian period and the Muhammadan conquest still depends on a mass of conflicting evidence derived from inscriptions, legendary literature, unwritten traditions, and coins¹⁹. Four systems of computation exist, based upon the Vikramaditya, Saka, Seleucidan, and Parthian eras.

GREEKS IN BENGAL

In the midst of the confusion, we see dim masses moving southward from Central Asia into India. The Græco-Bactrian kings or expeditions are traced by coins as far as Muttra on the Jumna. Their armies occupied for a time the Punjab, as far south as Gujarat and Sind. Sanskrit texts are said to indicate

¹⁹ *Report of the Archaeological Survey of Western India for 1874-75*, p. 49 (E. Thomas' monograph).

their advance through the Middle Land of the Brahmans (*Madhya-desha*) to Saketa (or Ajodhya), the capital of Oudh, and to Patna in Behar.²⁰ Megasthenes was only the first of a series of Greek ambassadors to Bengal.²¹ A Grecian prince became the queen of Chandra Gupta at Patna (*circ.* 306 B.C.). Græco-Bactrian girls, or Yavanis, were welcome gifts, and figure in the Sanskrit drama as the personal attendants of Indian kings. They were probably fair-complexioned slaves from the northern regions. It is right to add, however, that the Sanskrit word Yavana has a much wider application than merely to the Greeks or even to the Bactrians. The credentials of the Indian embassy to Augustus in 22-20 B.C. were written on skins ; a circumstance which perhaps indicates the extent to which Greek usage had overcome Brahmanical prejudices. During the century preceding the Christian era, Scythian or Tartar hordes began to supplant the Græco-Bactrian influence in the Punjab.

The term Yavana, or Yona, which originally applied to several non-Brahmanical races, and especially to the Greeks, was also extended to the Sakæ or Scythians. It probably includes many widely various tribes of invaders from the west. Patient effort will be required before the successive changes in the meaning of Yavana, both before and after the Greek period, are worked out. The word travelled far, and has survived with a strange vitality in out-of-the-way nooks of India. The Orissa chroniclers called the sea-invaders from the Bay of Bengal, Yavanas, and in later times the term was applied to the Musalmans.²² At the present day, a vernacular form of the word is said to have supplied the local name for the Arab settlers on the Coromandel coast.²³

²⁰ Goldstucker assigned the Yavana siege of Saketa (Ajodhya), mentioned in the *Mahabhashya*, to Menander ; while the accounts of the Gargi Sanhita in the Yuga Purana speak of a Yavana expedition as far as Patna. But, as Weber points out (*Hist. Ind. Lit.* p. 251, footnote 276), the question arises as to whether these Yavanas were Græco-Bactrians or Indo-Scythians. See, however, Report of Archaeological Survey of Western India for 1874-75, p. 49, and footnote.

²¹ Weber, *Hist. Ind. Lit.*, p. 251 (ed., 1878), enumerates four.

²² Hunter's *Orissa*, vol. i. pp. 25, 85, and 209 to 232 (ed., 1872).

²³ Bishop Caldwell gives Yavanas (Yonas) as the equivalent of the Sonagas or Muhammadans of the western coast : *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*, 2nd edition, p. 2 (Trubner, 1875).

CHAPTER X

GREEK AND ROMAN INDIA

BY J. TALBOYS WHEELER

The year B.C. 327 marks an important era in the history of India. More than two centuries are supposed to have elapsed since the death of Gotama Buddha. The great empire of Magadha was apparently falling into anarchy, but Brahmanism and Buddhism were still expounding their respective dogmas on the banks of the Ganges. At this juncture Alexander of Macedon was leading an army of Greeks down the Kabul river towards the river Indus, which at that time formed the western frontier of the Punjab. The circumstances under which the Greeks appeared in that remote quarter are amongst the most extraordinary in the history of the world. Alexander was only twenty-eight years of age, yet he had already scattered the armies of the great king in three victories which convulsed Asia ; and had then ascended the throne of Darius as sovereign lord of Persia and her satraps. He was a hero, a demi-god, who had introduced a new power into Asia, which was a terror and a mystery. The Macedonian phalanx was an embodiment of union and strength ; a development of that political cohesion amongst Europeans, which Asiatics can never understand, and against which they are powerless to contend.¹

CHARACTER AND POLICY OF ALEXANDER

Ostensibly, as captain-general of Hellas, Alexander had avenged the wrongs inflicted upon Greece by Darius and Xerxes. Personally, as Alexander of Macedon, he had sought to realize that dream of universal dominion which had long taken possession of his soul. He was not a mere Tartar leader, eager only to plunder and destroy. Neither was he the leader of a new crusade for carrying Greek culture into Asia. He was a soldier statesman of the true Aryan or political type, who identified himself with the empire he had conquered. When he had seated him-

¹ *The best authorities for the details of the expedition of Alexander are Arrian and Strabo. Where other authors have been consulted, they will be specially cited. The object has been to indicate the general course of Alexander's invasion, and to omit all unnecessary details which throw no real light upon the history of ancient India.*

self upon the throne of Darius, he saw, what every Asiatic statesman has seen, from Cyrus to Nadir Shah, that Persia can never be strong unless she can maintain a paramount power over all the barbarous Scythic tribes to the north and eastward. Accordingly he invaded the north, crossed the westearn Himalayas, and conquered Balkh ; and then crossed the river Oxus and conquered Khiva and Bokhara as far as the Jaxartes. Then, having subdued every enemy in his rear, he approached the Punjab, with the view of realizing his ambitious dream in all its fulness. He believed India to be the extremity of the earth towards the eastern ocean ; and he resolved to make it the eastern province of his Asiatic empire.

But the power of the Macedonian phalanx was already on the wane. The Hellenic tie to which it owed all its strength was beginning to be weakened by orientalism.

ORIENTALIZING OF ALEXANDER AND HIS ARMY

In identifying himself with a Persian sovereign, Alexander committed the fatal error of endeavouring to recommend himself to his Persian subjects by descending to a Persian level. He exchanged the Greek helmet for the Persian tiara, and became a Persian in his thoughts and ways. He had no passion for women like his father Philip ; but he fell in love with Roxana, the beautiful damsel of Bactria, whom he actually made his wife.² Under these circumstances he began to imbibe the oriental vices of effeminacy, vindictiveness, and greediness of praise. He listened to the voice of flattery until he believed himself to be something more than mortal. India had been conquered by Herakles and Dionysos ;³ and his parasites assured him that his exploits were already surpassing those of the gods. His passion for fame and glory amounted to a craving which nothing could satisfy short of worship and adoration. How far that passion was gratified during his lifetime, it is impossible to say ; but to this day his oriental name of Sekunder is as widely renowned throughout Mussulman Asia, as that of Alexander of Macedon in the western world.

² Stories are told of the amours of Alexander, but they are mere rumours. The real truth is sufficiently indicated in Athenæus, Book x. c. 45. Alexander was more devoted to wine than to women.

³ The legend of the conquest of India by Herakles and Dionysos has a religious origin. It seems to have been derived from two different cults, namely :—from the worship of the Sun as Vishnu or Hari ; and from that of Siva or Mahadeva as an orgiastic deity. The idea of a military conquest by these deities is purely mythical.

PLAN OF THE PUNJAB CAMPAIGN

The main plan of Alexander's invasion may be sketched in a few words. The Kabul river flows due east past the cities of Kabul, Jellalabad, and Peshwar, and finally empties itself into the Indus near the fort of Attock. Eastward of the Indus is the fertile territory of the Punjab, which is watered by seven tributaries, namely, the upper Indus, the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, the Sutlej, and the Saraswati ; all of which, excepting the Saraswati, flow into the main stream of the Indus, which thence runs south through the country of Sind into the Indian Ocean.⁴ The design of Alexander was to conquer all the region westward of the Indus, including the territory of Kabul ; and then to cross the Indus in the neighbourhood of Attock, and march through the Punjab in a south-easterly direction, crossing all the tributary rivers on his way ; and finally to pass down the valley of the Ganges and Jumna, via Delhi and Agra, and conquer the great Gangetic empire of Magadha or Pataliputra between the ancient cities of Prayaga and Gour.

This plan involved the conquest of several petty kingdoms in succession. Before crossing the Indus there was amongst others a queen of the Assacani, who reigned in a city named Massaga, which was apparently situated in Kabul territory. Again, after crossing the Indus, there were at least three kingdoms in the Punjab to be subdued one after the other, namely ;—that of Taxila between the Indus and the Jhelum ; that of Porus the elder between the Jhelum and the Chenab ; and that of Porus the younger between the Chenab and the Ravi. Porus the elder was said to have been the most powerful sovereign of them all ; but he was placed between two fires, for both Taxilla on one side, and his nephew Porus the younger on his eastern frontier, were his enemies. There were also other kings both on the north and on the south, who were apparently either at war with Porus the elder, or else in friendly alliance. It would thus seem, from the eminence assigned to Porus the elder, that his authority was not limited to the extent of his kingdom ; and that he was at least the nominal suzerain or lord-paramount

⁴ *Five only of these rivers were personally known to Alexander, namely, the Indus, the Jhelum or Hydaspes, the Chenab or Acesines, the Ravee or Hydraotis, and the Beas or Hyphasis. Alexander does not appear to have advanced eastward to the Sutlej. (Compare Burnes's Bokhara, vol. i. chap. 1.) In former times the Saraswati flowed into the Indus, but it now loses itself in the sand.*

of the Punjab, if not of Kabul ; whilst the so-called hostile sovereigns were originally nothing more than refractory vassal kings.⁵

POLITICAL SYSTEM OF ANCIENT INDIA

Here it should be remarked that Asiatic empires are genearily speaking mere congeries of provinces, satrapies, or vassal kingdoms, severally ruled by local governors or kings, who are each expected to pay a yearly tribute to the suzerain, and to contribute a military contingent in the event of an imperial war. Such a political system is naturally exposed to dismemberment from internal revolt, to sudden revolutions from court factions, and to foreign invasion in moments of weakness or false security. It can only be maintained by the sword, supported as far as may be by an aristocratic priesthood ; and hedged round with the pomp, prestige, and supposed divine right of royalty. In spite, however, of revolution and practical dismemberment, such is the conservative character of Asiatic ideas, and the force of routine and traditional authority, that the nominal supremacy of a suzerain will often be retained long after the political ties have been virtually destroyed. Such apparently was the state of Kabul and the Punjab at the time of the invasion of Alexander ; although.....he deemed it politic to treat the refractory vassal kings as independent sovereigns.⁶

⁵ *This supremacy of Porus is further confirmed by Hindu tradition. The existence of an ancient Kshatriya empire in the Punjab, under what is known as the Lunar dynasty of Rajas, or children of the Moon, is frequently referred to in Sanskrit literature. It was known as the empire of Puru, Bharata, and the Pandavas ; and the Sanskrit name of Puru seems still to be preserved in the Greek Porus. Ferishta, the Mussulman historian, states that Porus or P'hoor conquered the whole of Hindustan, including Bengal, as far as the ocean, and that he refused to pay tribute to the king of Persia. Ferishta adds :—"The Brahmanical and other historians are agreed that P'hoor marched his army to the frontier of India in order to oppose the invasion of Alexander. Introductory chapter on the Hindus, vol. i. Briggs' translation.*

⁶ *The state of India under the Moghul empire during the eighteenth century was much in the same condition ; and Clive and Hastings followed the policy of Alexander in treating Subahdars and Nawabs of provinces as independent sovereigns. But such is the power of a mere name, that generations after the Moghul emperor had been stripped of every shred of authority, his shadow of a throne became the rallying point of the mutineers in 1857.*

STRATEGY OF ALEXANDER

The military operations of Alexander were not those of an ordinary invader. His oriental experiences had already rendered him suspicious of intrigues, but had not entirely destroyed the native generosity of his character. In like manner his oriental indulgences had perverted his moral sense, but had not vitiated his military and political culture. He came flushed with the glory of his Asiatic conquests, profoundly believing in his own high destiny, proud of himself and his irresistible phalanx, but, like a true soldier, neglecting no measure of precaution that would guard against any probable or possible disaster. He feared no enemy in front, but his knowledge of Asiatics taught him that danger might always be apprehended in his rear ; that he must make every footing sure before advancing another step ; in other words, that he must obtain by policy or force the full submission of every enemy whom he might be compelled to leave behind him. He was prepared to be liberal to those who submitted without a battle ; and to be equally liberal to those who only surrendered after an obstinate resistance. But he was resolved to punish with remorseless severity all who attempted to revolt after once submitting, or who sought to deceive him by cajolery or lies.

POLICY IN KABUL : SUBMISSION OF TAXILES

The first measure of Alexander was a wise stroke of policy. On reaching the Kabul river he sent messengers in advance to the neighbouring princes to announce his arrival, and call upon them to attend his camp and tender their submission. Probably he thus acted in the capacity of sovereign lord of Persia, to whom the whole region had been tributary in a previous generation ;⁷ but the measure invested him with the character of a protector to all who were hostile to Porus. The result was that many of the princes of the country hastened to his camp. Amongst these was Taxiles, who brought presents for Alexander of extreme richness and rarity. The submission of Taxiles was very gratifying to Alexander. The kingdom of Taxiles intervened between the river Indus and the kingdom of Porus, which commenced at the Jhelum ; and thus formed an admirable basis for military operations against Porus. Accordingly Alexander sent a detachment northward to occupy the city and kingdom of Peukelaotis, with the view of making preparations for ferrying the army across the Indus.⁸

⁷ *Herodotus*, iii. 94, 95, 102.

⁸ *Taxiles accompanied the expedition, and evidently had an eye to his own interest. He was at enmity with Astes, the king of*

WARLIKE CHARACTER OF THE TRIBES IN KABUL

Whilst preparations were in progress at Peukelaotis, Alexander was engaged in reducing the tribes eastward of the Indus. These people were dwelling in the territory, which is now called Kabul, and occupied by the Afghans. They are described as being more war-like than any of the other Indians. When defeated in the plains they retired to their walled towns, and when their towns were taken by assault they fled to the mountains. Sometimes they were so alarmed at the reports of Alexander's prowess that they burnt down their towns, and escaped to the mountains, before he came up. At last after some desperate fighting they lost courage, and dispersed to their more distant strongholds.⁹ The most formidable enemy was a queen of a tribe called the Assacani. Her name was Cleophes, and she reigned in a city named Massaga. She had engaged seven thousand brave mercenaries from the interior of India, who marched out into the plain and offered the Macedonians battle.

REDUCTION OF THE ASSACANI : CAPTURE OF AORNOS

Alexander drew them some distance from the city by pretending to retreat, and then turned round and attacked them with his phalanx. The Macedonians gained a complete victory, but could not prevent the fugitives from escaping to the city. Massaga was then besieged, and made an obstinate resistance. At last the mercenaries were disheartened by the death of their commander and their own losses in killed and wounded, and sent a herald to Alexander, and offered to enter his service. The offer was accepted. The mercenaries left the city, and drew up on a little hill near the Macedonian camp. Alexander, however, discovered that they intended to desert that very night, rather than fight their own countrymen; and he accordingly surrounded the hill and cut them all off. He then captured the city, and finally received the submission of queen Cleophes, and

Peukelaotis; for he had previously harboured a political refugee from Astes, named Sangæus; and it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that he now intrigued to procure the transfer of the kingdom from Astes to Sangæus. The incident, however, is very simply narrated by Arrian. Astes attempted a revolt, and his city was captured after a thirty days' siege, and he himself was slain. The kingdom was then given to Sangæus by Alexander. Arrian, Exped. iv. 23.

⁹ Arrian, Exped. iv. 25, 26.

re-instated her in the possession of her kingdom.¹⁰ The campaign westward of the Indus was brought to a close by the capture of a famous natural fortress known as Aornos, which was deemed impregnable, and had been a place of refuge for a large number of defeated warriors. Alexander took it after a prolonged struggle. It has been identified with the Mahabun mountain.¹¹

ALEXANDER CROSSES THE JHELMUM IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY

When Alexander had fully established his authority in Kabul he crossed the Indus into the Punjab. Here he halted some time at the city of Taxila, and then marched to the river Jhelum, and found that Porus the elder was encamped on the opposite bank with a large force of cavalry and infantry, together with chariots and elephants. The decisive battle which followed on the Jhelum is one of the most remarkable actions in ancient story. Alexander had to cross the river, not only in the face of his enemy, but whilst exposed to the wind and rain of the south-west monsoon. The passage could only be effected by surprise. At length one dark and stormy night he succeeded in reaching a small island in the river with part of his infantry and a select body of cavalry; and then, amidst a tempest of rain and thunder, he and his troops waded through the remainder of the stream breast high, and reached the opposite bank. The lightning probably revealed the men and horses plunging through the river; for the Indian scouts at once rushed off to carry the news to Porus. The Indian king was evidently taken by surprise, but hurriedly despatched his son with a force of cavalry and chariots to oppose the invaders. A sharp engagement ensued, but the Indian chariots could not be drawn through the wet clay, and were nearly all captured. Alexander lost his horse Bukephalus in the action, but the son of Porus was amongst the slain.¹²

¹⁰ *Quintus Curtius relates (viii. 10) that this queen obtained the restoration of her kingdom by the sacrifice of her honour. Justin (xii. 11) repeats the story. Quintus Curtius was no doubt a romancer, but still the incident is not in itself opposed to the law of war as regards women, which prevailed amongst the ancient Kshatriyas.*

¹¹ *Arrian, Exped. iv. 25—30. General Cunningham prefers identifying Aornos with a ruined fortress named Rani-gat.—Ancient Geog. of India, p. 58.*

¹² *Arrian, Exped. v. 1—15.*

DEFEAT OF PORUS THE ELDER

When Porus heard of this disaster, he at once moved against Alexander with the greater part of his army. He took up a position on a firm and sandy plain. In front was a line of two hundred elephants, each about a hundred feet from his neighbour. This line of elephants was supported from behind by masses of infantry; whilst the two flanks of the army were formed of chariots and cavalry. Alexander was strongest in cavalry. Instead, therefore, of attacking the enemy's centre, he assailed the two flanks, and drove in the Indian horse upon the elephants. Porus endeavoured to oppose his elephants to the Macedonian cavalry, but the unwieldy animals could not keep pace with the rapid movements of the horse; and at length were wounded and frightened, and rushed madly about trampling down the Indian infantry. Porus fought with a valour which excited the admiration of Alexander, but was at last wounded and compelled to fly. Ultimately he was induced to tender his submission, but in the true spirit of a Rajpoot he demanded to be treated as a king. Alexander responded with his usual generosity, and the two princes who had recently met as deadly foes now regarded each other as firm friends.¹³

RESULTS OF THE MACEDONIAN VICTORY: FORMATION OF A MACEDONIAN FLEET ON THE JHELM

The victory over Porus established the ascendancy of Alexander in the Punjab. It was probably of more consequence to the great Macedonian than his flatterers would acknowledge. A defeat would have been destruction; for Porus would have undoubtedly followed up his success by the conquest of Taxiles; and Alexander would have been left single-handed to cut his way through the war-like mountaineers of Kabul, who had already given him considerable trouble. The victory, however, not only decided the question between himself and Porus, but enabled him to open up a new communication with Persia, via the river Indus and the Indian Ocean. He sent out woodmen to cut timber for ship-building in the northern forests, and to float it down the Jhelum; and he founded two cities, Bukephalia and Nikæa, one on each side of the Jhelum; ostensibly in memory of his horse Bukephalus, and in commemoration of his victory, but in reality as suitable spots for the construction of a flotilla on the Indus. The formation of a fleet was indeed in accordance with that soldierly instinct which led Alexander to

¹³ *Arrian, Eped. v. 15—20.*

take on all occasions every precaution that would ensure the safety of his army. But still in dealing with his motives, a large allowance must always be made for his boundless imagination. He had seen crocodiles in the river Indus, and at first fancied that this river was the same as the Nile; and even arrived at the conclusion that by descending the Indus he might find himself in Egypt and the Mediterranean. Further information convinced him of his error, but awakened a new idea. He was assured that the ocean intervened between India and Egypt; and it had ever been the object of his ambition to penetrate to that mysterious ocean, which Homer had supposed to surround the world. It was partly to realize this dream that he purposed conquering the lower Ganges as far as this ocean; and failing that, he hoped to reach the same distant sea by the Jhelum and Indus rivers.

ADVANCE OF ALEXANDER TO THE CHENAB : FLIGHT OF PORUS THE YOUNGER

Whilst the fleet was being constructed, Alexander continued his march to the Chenab, and crossed that river into the dominions of Porus the younger. This prince, like Taxiles, had been prepared to support the Macedonian invader out of hostility to Porus the elder; but having heard that his uncle had been re-instated in his kingdom and reconciled to Alexander, he was seized with such a panic of fear that he hastily abandoned his throne and went into exile. Alexander accordingly made over his kingdom to the elder Porus, and nothing afterwards is heard of the nephew.¹⁴

Alexander next crossed the Ravi, when he was called back by tidings of importance. The Kathæi, an important tribe between the Chenab and the Ravi, had broken out in rebellion; and as Alexander never permitted an enemy in his rear, he hastened back and reduced them to obedience by the capture of their capital at Sangala.¹⁵

SPIRIT OF THE MACEDONIANS BROKEN BY THE SOUTH-WEST MONSOON

But meantime the Macedonians had grown weary of their campaign in India. Their spirits had been broken, not so much

¹⁴ *Arrian, Exped. v. 21.*

¹⁵ *The Kathæi had formed a confederation with the Oxydrakæ and Malli, who appear to have occupied the territory in the neighbourhood of Multan. After the fall of Sangala these two tribes tendered their submission to Alexander.*

by the toils of war, as by the wind and rain of the south-west monsoon; and by this time their love of ease and sensual gratification had blunted that passion for glory and dominion which had formerly animated the phalanx. Accordingly they utterly refused to advance to the Ganges, and clamoured loudly to be conducted back to Greece. Alexander remonstrated with them in vain. He urged that the river Ganges was not far off; that it fell into the eastern ocean which communicated with the Caspian; and that if they proceeded they would obtain immortal renown by their conquests and discoveries. But the Macedonians sullenly resisted every attempt to lead them beyond the Sutlej; and Alexander, making a virtue of necessity, at last consulted the oracles and found that they were unfavourable to an onward movement. The expedition of Alexander now loses its interest. He returned with his army to the Jhelum, and embarked on board the fleet with a portion of his troops, whilst the remainder of his army marched along either bank. In this manner he proceeded almost due south through the Punjab and Sind towards the mouth of the Indus; engaging in hostilities against certain tribes who offered resistance, or who revolted after making due submission. In some cases the insurgents were encouraged by the Brahmans; but Alexander wreaked his vengeance by slaughtering every Brahman that came in his way. At last he reached the Indian Ocean, and beheld for the first time the phenomena of the tides; and then landed his army and marched through Beluchistan towards Susa, whilst Nearchos conducted the fleet to the Persian Gulf, and finally joined him in the same city.¹⁶

RETURN OF THE EXPEDITION TO PERSIA

The Greeks who accompanied Alexander into the Punjab were careful and acute observers. They accurately described the face of the country, the numerous towns and villages, the abundant harvests, the variety of fruits and vegetables, the cotton shrubs said to produce wool, the sugar-canes said to yield honey, the pillared shades of the banyan trees, the alligators, the elephants, the monkeys, the large serpents, the small cobras, the scorpions, the lizards, the ants, and all the numerous strange

¹⁶ *Arrian, v. 22, et seq.* The military operations carried on by Alexander during his voyage down the Indus are related at considerable length by Arrian, but throw no further light upon the history of India. Some interesting details respecting the identification of localities will be found in General Cunningham's "Ancient Geography of India."

sights which meet the eye of every Indian traveller. But they failed to penetrate into the inner life of the people. They saw only the surface, and not very much of that, for they were campaigners in a strange land, harassed throughout by wind and rain; and notwithstanding the enthusiasm of their leader, it is evident that they were utterly weary of the depressing moisture and sweltering heat of the land of Dionysos and Herakles. Some sights attracted their curiosity, but they disclosed little of the thoughts and aspirations of the general population.

ABSENCE OF CASTE IN THE PUNJAB

One important fact may be elicited, that in the Punjab, or at any rate in the countries traversed by Alexander, there was as yet no appearance of caste distinctions. This is proved by the absence of all allusions to caste in the history of Alexander's expedition. It is moreover confirmed by the absence of all similar allusions in the older and more authentic hymns of the Rig-Veda. Had the institution existed, it could scarcely have failed to have attracted the attention of the Greeks; especially as they were eagerly searching for all resemblances between Egypt and India, and would naturally have been struck by such a remarkable similarity in the caste systems of the respective countries.

VARIETY OF MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

The absence of such distinctions in the Punjab may be further inferred from the description of the marriage customs, as furnished by the Greeks who accompanied Alexander. According to the strict law, which, as will presently be seen, already prevailed amongst the people of Hindustan, no member of any caste, or hereditary trade or profession, could marry out of his own class.¹⁷ Yet the marriage customs of the Punjab involved ideas altogether foreign to this law, although not foreign to the difference of tribes. Thus in some tribes virgins were offered as marriage prizes in boxing, wrestling, running, and archery; and the winners chose their own brides, but married them without portions.¹⁸ In other tribes a wife was to be bought for a pair of kine,¹⁹ but a man might marry as many women as he could maintain. But a custom prevailed in the city of Taxila which

¹⁷ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 49.*

¹⁸ *Nearchos in Strabo, India, sect. 66. Arrian, India, c. xvii. This custom may be referred to the ancient Swayamvara.*

¹⁹ *This was the old marriage custom, which prevailed amongst the Vedic Rishis.*

plainly indicates that caste, in the modern Brahmanical sense of the word, was unknown. Whenever parents were so poor that they could not procure husbands for their daughters, they exposed the damsels at a marriageable age for public sale in the bazaar or market-place. A crowd of men was collected by the blowing of shell trumpets and beating of drums. The necks and shoulders of the young women were then uncovered; and when a young man was pleased with a damsel, he married her upon such terms as might be agreed upon.²⁰

Two important classes or tribes, however, are described by the Greeks who accompanied Alexander, who were evidently regarded as superior races; and each class had its own characteristics, which may have subsequently hardened them into castes. These were the wise men, or Brahmans, who were also called sophists and philosophers; and the Kathæi, who may have been the ancient Kshatriyas.

THE BRAHMANS

The Brahmans or philosophers followed a variety of pursuits. Some were engaged in public affairs, and attended the Raja as counsellors. Others practised religious austerities by remaining in one position for days, and exposing themselves to the blazing sun. Others imparted religious instruction to their respective disciples. Others pursued the study of nature; theoretically perhaps by the contemplative process already indicated, but practically they displayed their knowledge by prognostications respecting rain, drought, and diseases. When not otherwise occupied they repaired to the bazar or market-place. They were held in great honour as public advisers; and were permitted to take what they pleased from the shops, such as honey, sesamum, figs, and grapes. They went about in a state of nudity, but every house was open to them, even to the women's apartments;

²⁰ *Aristobulus in Strabo, India, sect. 54, 62. The disposal of maidens by public sale was an old Babylonian custom. It is described by Herodotus, who considered it to be the wisest marriage custom with which he was acquainted. The maidens were put up to public auction. The handsome ones were sold off first, and would fetch high prices from the rich Babylonians. The plainer maidens were helped off by dowries which were provided out of the proceeds. Thus when a handsome maiden was put up, the rich strove who would give the highest price. When a plain damsel was put up, the poor strove who would take her with the smallest dowry. Thus the handsome girls helped the plainer ones to husbands. Herodotus, i. 196.*

and wherever they went they shared in the conversation, and partook of what food was present. Two of them came to the table of Alexander, and took their meal standing; a circumstance which would alone seem to prove the absence of caste ideas amongst the Punjab Brahmans. When they had finished they retired to a neighbouring spot, and commenced their religious austerities exposed to the sun and rain. These Punjab Brahmans are said to have regarded disease as a disgrace, and it is added that those who feared its approach burnt themselves alive.²¹

CURIOSITY OF ALEXANDER

Alexander was himself much interested in the Brahmans at Taxila. Neither he nor his Macedonian followers were religious inquirers in the modern sense of the word. The worship of the gods was still maintained in Greece at festivals and sacrifices, and there still existed a strong popular belief in oracles; but the fervid interest and deep religious awe with which Herodotus had gazed on the deities and mysteries of Egypt, were neither felt nor expressed by the men whose intellects had been trained in the political struggles which had long distracted Hellas. To them the gods of India were merely Dionysos and Herakles, the popular gods of their own country;²² and the religious worship of the people was apparently regarded with a condescending curiosity which bordered on contempt. But from the first the Brahmans had attracted the attention of Alexander. He had been struck by their fortitude and resolution in voluntarily subjecting themselves to severe austerities and penances; and he was curious to know something of the dogmas which led to such results. Accordingly he sent for them to come to him, but was told that if he wanted to hear their discourse he must come to them. So he sent Onesikritos to converse with them.²³

INTERVIEW BETWEEN ONESIKRITOS AND THE BRAHMANS

The interview which ensued must have been a strange one, but only those perhaps who are familiar with India can realize it

²¹ *This was not the case with all the Brahmans. Strabo, India, sect. 61, 65.*

²² *Mention is also made of Zeus the rainy, who of course was the Indra of the Rig-Veda; and the Hindus are also said to have worshipped the Ganges. Strabo, India, sect. 69.*

²³ *Strabo, India, sect. 63 et seq.*

in all its significance. A green jungle between two and three miles from the city. A group of fifteen naked Bra'hmans ; some standing on one leg, and holding a log of wood above their heads with both hands ; others lying or sitting on the bare stones. All exposed to the pitiless glare of an Indian sun which alone would account for much of their religious mania. A mixed crowd of disciples and wondering worshippers doubtless stood around. The European visitor approached in Greek costume, accompanied by his interpreters ; and all present were doubtless eager to hear what words would pass between the stranger and the holy men.²⁴

ARROGANCE OF KALANOS THE BRAHMAN

Onesikritos appears to have been rather too anxious to propitiate. Moreover the natural arrogance of Kalanos, the Bra'hman whom he addressed, was stimulated by such conciliatory language, and possibly by the presence of an admiring auditory. The Greek commenced by saying that the great king Alexander, who was himself a deity, had heard of the wisdom of Kalanos, and desired to be informed of the nature of his teaching. Kalanos was lying naked on the stones, and replied in the language of oriental insolence : "Your clothing is contrary to nature and offensive to deity : By such pride and luxury, want and misery have been brought upon mankind : In former days grain was as abundant as the dust, and milk and honey, wine and oil, flowed as freely as water : But the deity grew angry at the luxury of the human race, and withdrew the abundance ; and if such luxury continues, famine and drought will follow : If therefore you would learn wisdom, you must return to a state of nature, and lie down upon these stones."²⁵

BEHAVIOUR OF MANDANIS

The polite Greek must have been somewhat startled by this extraordinary demand from a naked philosopher. Fortunately a Bra'hman, named Mandanis, interposed, and rebuked Kalanos for his insolence to a foreigner. "For my part," said Mandanis, "I cannot but admire Alexander, who is seeking after wisdom although in possession of an empire : If all kings were like him, the whole world might be compelled to virtue : Know, O Greek ! the only true philosophy is that which renders the soul indifferent both to pleasure and pain : Tell me, is this truth

²⁴ *Strabo, India, sect. 63 et seq.*

²⁵ *Strabo, India, sect. 64.*

known in your country ? ” Onesikritos replied that Pythagoras had taught a similar doctrine, and had commanded his disciples to eat nothing which had life ; and that he himself had heard similar discourses from Socrates and Diogenes. “ So far they are right,” said Mandanis ; “ but they are wrong in being slaves to custom, and in not returning to a state of nature.”²⁶

But notwithstanding the better behaviour of Mandanis, neither promises nor threats could induce him to come to Alexander. He derided that King’s pretensions to deity ; he wanted nothing, and he feared no one. “ When I die,” he said, “ my soul will escape from the trammels of the body, and enter into a better and purer state of existence.” Kalanos, on the other hand, was a type of the common Bra’hman. From one extreme he ran to the other. He attended on Alexander, became a slave to his table, accompanied him when he left India, and rehearsed his praises after the fashion of the old Kshatriya bards. Ultimately he was attacked with disease, and deliberately committed suicide on a funeral pile.²⁷

THE KATHÆI OR KSHATRIYAS

The Kathæi were perhaps Kshatriyas or Rajpoots.²⁸ At any rate their customs were of a Rajpoot character.²⁹ They had a Spartan admiration of strength and beauty. They chose the handsomest man to be their king ; and although it is difficult to accept this statement as a well-ascertained fact, yet Porus is said to have been more than six feet high and of excellent proportions. They subjected every child to a public examination when it was two months old ; in order that the presiding magistrate might decide whether it was handsome enough to live, or whether death was to be its doom.

INFANTICIDE AND SATI

To this day the crime of infanticide is almost universal amongst the Rajpoots, but it is confined entirely to females. The Rajpoots confess that their daughters are murdered to avoid the

²⁶ Strabo, *India*, sect. 64.

²⁷ The incidents recorded in the text respecting the Brahmans are based on the authority of Onesikritos himself. Strabo, *India*, sec. 63—65.

²⁸ In modern vernaculars the Kshatriyas are called Kattris. The Kathæi, however, have been identified with the Chatties of Kattagwar in Guzerat.

²⁹ Strabo, *India*, sect. 30.

difficulty of procuring suitable husbands, and to escape the inordinate expense of marriage ceremonies ; and it is impossible to say how far the existing custom has been borrowed from the ancient usage. Marriages amongst the Kathæi were guided by the mutual choice of the bride and bridegroom ; in other words, they were a form of the ancient Swayamvara ;³⁰ but according to the Rajpoot custom, known as Sati, the living wife was burnt alive with the deceased husband.³¹

MUTINY OF THE INDIAN MERCENARIES

Alexander had invaded the Punjab during the rainy season of B.C. 327, and reached the Indian Ocean about the middle of B.C. 326. Meantime Philip remained at Taxilla as his lieutenant or deputy, and commanded a garrison of mercenaries and a body-guard of Macedonians.³² When Alexander was marching through Beluchistan on his way to Susa, the news reached him that Philip had been murdered by the mercenaries, but that nearly all the murderers had been slain by the Macedonian body-guards. Alexander immediately despatched letters directing the Macedonian Eudemos to carry on the government in conjunction with Taxiles, until he could appoint another deputy ; and this provisional arrangement seems to have been continued until the death of Alexander in B.C. 323.³³

DEATH OF ALEXANDER, B.C. 323 : POLITICAL ANARCHY

The political anarchy which followed this catastrophe can scarcely be realized. Alexander was not thirty-three, and the

³⁰ See p. 24 of the original edition of the *History of India* by J. Talbois Wheeler.

³¹ According to the Greek authorities (Strabo, *India*, sect. 30) the Sati was instituted to check a practice of the women to poison their husbands for the sake of a younger lover. This statement does not harmonize with the assertion that the marriages were based upon mutual affection. Sati might have proved a check to poison in days when girls were compelled to accept old men as their husbands ; but nothing was to be feared from loving wives. The latter, however, obeyed the ordinance, from being imbued with an unquestioning faith that they would thereby join their husbands in a heaven of felicity.

³² Arrian, *Exped.* v. 8.

³³ Arrian, *vi.* 27.

conquests which he had already completed were sufficient to fire the imagination of every true soldier throughout all time. Yet his busy intellect had continued to form new schemes of empire and glory. He would circumnavigate Africa and explore the Caspian. He would conquer Arabia, Italy, and Carthage. He would create a universal dominion which should be bounded only by the ocean, and Babylon should be its capital. But these ambitious dreams had vanished in a moment. A drinking bout had been followed by a mortal fever, and the would-be demigod was lifeless clay. The ghastly tidings must have caused universal consternation. The vast empire of Alexander was held together by no political tie whatever beyond the mere terror of his name. The appointment of a successor was thus of urgent and paramount importance ; but there was literally no one to succeed, excepting a bastard half-brother who was hopelessly imbecile, and an unborn babe by an Asiatic wife, who might by chance prove to be a son. Ultimately the idiot and the infant were placed upon the throne as puppets ; and the generals of the deceased Alexander hastened to the provinces to prepare for wars against each other which were to deluge the world with blood.³⁴

EXPULSION OF THE GREEKS FROM INDIA BY SANDROKOTTOS

Meantime India was forgotten. Eudemos took advantage of the death of Alexander to murder Porus ; but was ultimately driven out of the Punjab with all his Macedonians by an adventurer who was known to the Greeks as Sandrokottos, and to the Hindu's as Chandragupta.³⁵ This individual is said to have delivered India from a foreign yoke only to substitute his own. The notices of his life, however, are of considerable interest, as he is the one Indian Raja who is known at once to Greek

³⁴ *Alexander had two Asiatic wives, Roxana and Stratira. Roxana was the daughter of a Baktrian chief on the upper Oxus, who had attracted his admiration, and whom he had accordingly married. Stratira was a daughter of Darius, and was treacherously murdered by the jealous Roxana after the death of Alexander. Roxana and her semi-Asiatic son were not likely to be held in much esteem by Greek generals ; it is not therefore surprising that both were treated as puppets and ultimately murdered.*

³⁵ *Diodorus Siculus, xix. 1 ; Justin, xv. 4.*

history, Hindu' tradition, the Buddhist chronicles, and the Sanskrit drama.

GREEK ACCOUNTS OF SANDROKOTTOS

According to classical writers, Sandroktos was at the city of Taxilla when Alexander was there at the commencement of his Punjab campaign. He was an exiled prince from the great kingdom on the lower Ganges, said to be about eleven days' journey from the Punjab.³⁶ He was bitterly hostile to the reigning sovereign, name Aggrammes, and denounced him as a weak king of mean extraction, who permitted his dominions to be overrun by banditti.³⁷ Sandroktos stated that Alexander could easily conquer the kingdom on the Ganges ; but at the same time the Indian exile had so exasperated the great Macedonian by his impertinence, that he only saved his life by a speedy retreat from the Punjab. This impertinence probably consisted in exaggerated notions of his own importance, and a pertinacious assertion of his own claims to the throne of Aggrammes, which would be irritating to a conqueror who respected no claim but that of the sword. After Alexander left the Punjab, Sandroktos experienced a strange run of good fortune. By the aid of banditti he captured the city of Patali-putra, and obtained the throne ; and then drove the Greeks out of India, and established his empire over the whole of Hindustan and the Punjab.³⁸

Thirteen years after the death of Alexander, the political convulsions which had shaken the civilized world to its centre began slowly to subside. The vast empire was dismembered into four great provinces ; and although the whole area was the theatre of frequent wars, yet the provinces were beginning to harden into independent kingdoms.

³⁶ *It was called the kingdom of the Gangaridæ and Prasii, and probably corresponded to Magadha and Kosala, the modern Behar and Oude. The name of Prasii seems to linger in that of Prasa-najit, king of Kosala.*

³⁷ *The father of Aggrammes is said to have been a barber, who had an amour with the queen, and murdered her husband, and then placed his own son Aggrammes on the throne (Quintius Curtius, ix. 2). The scandal is unworthy of credit. It is simply the oriental form of abuse, which is directed not against the individual, but against his mother and other female relatives.*

³⁸ *Justin, xv. 4. Plutarch, Life of Alexander.*

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GREEK BACTRIAN EMPIRE OF SELEUKOS NIKATOR

The region between the Euphrates and the Indus fell to the lot of Seleukos Nikator, who dated his reign from the year B.C. 312, which is the era of the dynasty of the Seleukidæ. Seleukos Nikator had accompanied Alexander in his expedition into the Punjab ; and he appears to have been ambitious to carry out the designs of his great commander. Like him he conquered Bactria ; and then he turned towards the south and east, and appeared on the bank of the Indus. But he found himself confronted by a far superior enemy to the one whom Alexander had encountered. There was no longer a dismembered empire to be subdued in detail. Sandrokottos had already consolidated his imperial authority over the Punjab and Hindustan ; and was apparently enabled to concentrate such an overwhelming force on his north-west frontier that Seleukos deemed it expedient to cultivate his friendship, rather than assail him as an enemy. A treaty was accordingly concluded between the Greek sovereign and the Hindu' Raja. Sandrokottos supplied his Greek neighbour with a force of five hundred elephants. In return Seleukos ceded the mountain territory westward of the Indus ; and also gave one of his own daughters to be the bride of his Indian ally. This alliance was strengthened by the residence of a Greek ambassador named Megasthenes at the court of Sandrokottos ; and it will hereafter appear that the most authentic information respecting the condition and civilization of the Gangetic valley at this period is supplied by Megasthenes.³⁹

MARRIAGE OF THE HINDU RAJA TO A GREEK PRINCESS

The marriage of a Hindu' Raja to a Greek princess is an unexpected event in the history of India. In the Punjab it would perhaps have been less remarkable, because of the general absence of caste ideas. But in the Gangetic valley caste institutions had been maintained from time immemorial ; and Megasthenes, who resided for a considerable period at Pataliputra, bears direct testimony to the fact that in the kingdom of Sandrokottos no one was allowed to marry out of his caste or hereditary profession.⁴⁰ There is reason, however, to believe that

³⁹ *Strabo, India, sects. 36, 53, 57 ; Ariana, sect. 9. The Greek and Hindu authorities respecting Sandrokottos are reprinted in Wilson's Hindu Theatre, vol. ii. Preface to the Mudra Rakshasa.*

⁴⁰ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 49.*

Sandrokottos was a convert to Buddhism, and consequently not unwilling to prove to his Hindu' subjects that he had thrown off the trammels of caste. But under any circumstances such a marriage must have created a profound impression amongst a people so conservative as the Hindu's. It will be seen hereafter that traces of this marriage between Sandrokottos and a Greek princess lingered for many centuries in both Brahmanical and Buddhist tradition ; and the event ultimately gave rise to a controversy, which must have caused considerable agitation in the old Hindu' world, as to whether the son of a Raja by a Sudra' queen could rightly inherit the throne.

HINDU CIVILIZATION DESCRIBED BY MEGASTHENES : AUTHENTICITY OF HIS EVIDENCE

The pictures of old Hindu civilization which are presented by Megasthenes possess a value which has scarcely been sufficiently appreciated. They are drawn from real life, and generally from what the ambassador himself saw ; and though they are confined to the surface of society, they are of the highest importance as the authentic observations of a Greek political officer, elaborately drawn up at a period when such literary labour probably formed his chief amusement and occupation amidst the dreary monotony of an Asiatic court with its miserable intrigues and tedious ceremonial.⁴¹ Above all, Megasthenes, like Herodotus, was evidently anxious to furnish correct information. Those of his statements which were based upon mere hearsay evidence, may sometimes prove to be fabulous ; but for this the Greek ambassador cannot be held entirely responsible. Asiatics will exaggerate. Their imagination is boundless, and only equalled by their ignorance and credulity. No doubt they told stories, with the utmost gravity and child-like faith, of ants as big as foxes digging for gold, of men strong enough to pull up trees, of people with ears hanging down to their feet, and of other strange monstrosities.⁴² Megasthenes believed these stories,

⁴¹ *The position of the Greek ambassadors or residents at Pataliputra, seems to have strongly resembled that of the political agents of the British government at the court of Mandalay, the capital of the kingdom of upper Burma. The author was especially struck with this analogy during a visit to the political agent at Mandalay in 1870.*

⁴² *Strabo is unduly severe upon Megasthenes, and denounces him as a fabulist (Introd. sect. 9). Yet it is easy for any one conversant with India to point out the origin of many of the so-called fables. The ants are not as big as foxes, but they are very extraordinary excavators. The stories of men pulling up trees, and using them as clubs*

and naturally repeated them ; and it may be added that similar stories were related by Sir John Mandeville, and implicitly believed by our forefathers. But when Megasthenes tells us of what he saw, his statements may be accepted as authentic and reliable ; although they are susceptible of further explanation by the light of the larger experience which is available in the present day.

ANCIENT CAPITAL OF PATALIPUTRA, NEAR THE MODERN PATNA

Of Megasthenes himself little is known beyond the fact that he was a Greek ambassador, and apparently the first of his countrymen who had reached the banks of the Ganges, and entered the great and remote city of Patali-putra. He must have noted, though he does not say so, the quaint shipping in the river, which no doubt kept up a communication through the greater part of the empire, from the neighbourhood of the Punjab to the Bay of Bengal. He certainly observed with a military eye the great wooden wall or palisade which surrounded the city ; and he mentions that it was pierced with holes through which the archers could discharge their arrows against a besieging force. Outside this wall was a ditch which ran round the city, and probably communicated with the river ; and

are common enough in the Maha Bharata, especially in the legends of the exploits of Bhima. Men do not have ears hanging down to their feet, but both men and women will occasionally elongate their ears after a very extraordinary fashion by thrusting articles through the lobe. Other stories have been discredited, which are based upon actual fact. Megasthenes describes serpents with membranous wings like bats, whose moisture will putrefy the skin ; but these are nothing more than the common house lizards, and certainly their moisture will cause acute inflammation. Again, Megasthenes describes a river named Silas, in the Himalayas, on which nothing will float ; and here he has been obviously misled by some legend of Kailasa, the mountain heaven of Siva or Mahadeva.

If there was one story more than another which excited the wrath of Strabo, it was that of a people whose ears hung down to their feet. Yet the story is still current in Hindustan. Baboo Johurree Dass says :—"An old woman once told me that her husband, a sepoy in the British army, had seen a people who slept on one ear and covered themselves with the other." (Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindus. Benares, 1860). The story may be referred to the Himalayas. Fitch, who travelled in India about 1585, says that a people in Bootan had ears a span long.

which served both as a means of defence and a common sewer. He was impressed with the immense size of the city. Pataliputra was a vast metropolis in the shape of a parallelogram, extending ten miles along the bank of the river, and two miles into the interior. There the exiled Greek gazed upon the dreamy oriental life which still meets the eye in a Hindu or Burmese capital. The stately elephants, with richly ornamented howdahs moving slowly but majestically along; chariots and horsemen followed by numerous retinues; crowded bazaars, with their endless variety of shops, and industrious artisans of every class; the soldiers with their bows and arrows, their swords, bucklers, and javelins; the shameless Yogis and arrogant Brahmans. Megasthenes also describes a festival procession such as may still be occasionally seen in eastern cities. An array of elephants with furniture and trappings of gold and silver; numerous chariots drawn by four horses, or by several pairs of oxen; large bodies of attendants, handsomely attired, bearing huge vessels or goblets of gold and silver, as well as tables, state chairs, drinking cups, and bowls of Indian copper, richly set with emeralds, beryls, Indian carbuncles, and other precious stones; whilst the whole procession was invested with a sensational character from being associated with wild beasts, such as hump-backed oxen, panthers, tame lions, and a multitude of birds of variegated plumage and fine song.⁴³

ROYAL PALACE AND ZENANA

Megasthenes furnishes a picture of the royal palace at Pataliputra, which seems to have been more of a Tartar than an Aryan type. It was a splendid building occupied only by the Raja and his women; for even the body guard was stationed outside the gate. The palace women are said to have been purchased of their parents; but this statement probably refers only to those who filled the place of attendants or slaves. As regards the queens Megasthenes maintains a strict reserve; and thus nothing whatever is known of the married life of the Greek princess. As regards the Raja, it is said that he lived in such perpetual fear of treachery, that he never slept during the day,

⁴³ *Megasthenes in Strabo's India*, sects. 36, 69. Compare also the preparations for the installation of Rama as Yuvaraja. *History*, vol. ii., *Ramayana*, chap. 8.

A similar procession was to be seen at Rangoon in 1871, when the famous Shwe-Dagon pagoda was crowned with the gold Htee, or royal umbrella, excepting that on the latter occasion there were no wild beasts.

and frequently changed his bed at night, as a precaution against surprise.⁴⁴ It was unlawful for the Raja to get drunk; and according to a story which was told to the Greek ambassador, any woman who murdered a Raja whilst the latter was in a state of intoxication was rewarded by being made the queen of his successor.⁴⁵ The story, however, is open to question. No doubt it originated in the fact that a woman has occasionally murdered an Asiatic sovereign, on the understanding that she should become the wife of the heir to the throne. Such a promise, however, is generally broken by the new monarch, who can rarely bring himself to make the murderess his queen.

DUTIES AND AMUSEMENTS OF THE RAJA

The Raja was not always secluded in his palace. He left it whenever he took the command of the army, or sat in his court as judge, or offered sacrifice to the gods, or went on a hunting expedition. Sandrokottos seems to have been an able general, and no doubt spent much of his time with his army. Megasthenes describes his camp, which consisted of four hundred thousand men, and was yet maintained in good order and discipline. No useless or disorderly multitudes were tolerated. Theft was so rare amongst the troops, that the value of the articles stolen on any single day never exceeded two hundred drachmas. When the Raja sat as judge, he remained in the court the whole day, and allowed nothing to interrupt him. As regards his religious worship no further details are furnished; the reference, however, to his going out to sacrifice to the gods, proves that at this period, at any rate, the state religion was Brahmanical, whatever might have been the individual belief of Sandrokottos. The royal hunting expeditions are described at considerable length. The Raja went out with a crowd of women, who in their turn were surrounded on all sides by a number

⁴⁴ *The present king of upper Burma, or Ava, who evidently belongs to the Indo-Chinese type, although he claims a Kshatriya origin, leads a life of seclusion very similar to that of Sandrokottos. He changes his bed-room every night as a safeguard against sudden treachery.*

⁴⁵ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 55. The laws of Burma are also extremely severe against intoxication; indeed drunkenness is one of the five great crimes in the Buddhist code of morality. In 1845 the reigning sovereign was a drunkard, and had become a terror alike to his queens and ministers; at last he was suddenly seized in a state of intoxication, and placed in a state of confinement; and he is said to have been ultimately smothered in the recesses of the palace.*

of spearmen; whilst drums and gongs were beaten in front, probably to warn off all intruders. The road was guarded with ropes, and every stranger who passed within the ropes, whether man or woman, was put to death. So long as the Raja hunted within the enclosures, he discharged his arrows from a high seat, whilst two or three armed women stood near him. When, however, he hunted in the open plain he discharged his arrows from an elephant, whilst his women accompanied him in chariots, or on horses and elephants. On these occasions all the women were provided with arms, as though they were going on a military expedition.⁴⁶

HINNU BANQUETS

Of the inner life of the palace nothing more is recorded. One statement, however, has been preserved which seems to indicate that the ambassador was familiar with one phase of old Hindu life. He says that it was the custom at banquets to place a table, like a side-board, before each individual. A golden dish full of boiled rice was then placed on each table; after which different sorts of meat dressed in the Indian style were served up to the several guests.⁴⁷ In the present day a Hindu host will entertain his European guests in accordance with their own customs; but there is no reason to doubt that in the third century before Christ, Indian curries were served up much after the fashion described by Megasthenes.

DIFFERENCE OF CIVILIZATION IN THE PUNJAB AND HINDUSTAN

The civilization which prevailed in the great Gangetic empire of Sandrokottos was essentially different from that of the Punjab kingdom under Porus. The people were strictly divided into castes and hereditary professions. Again, the army was not composed of contributions from feudatory princes, but was a vast standing camp, maintained solely at the charge of the king. The government was not administered by feudal or vassal chieftains, under a suzerain or lord-paramount; but by a network of officials which spread over the entire empire. The Raja, as already seen, was an irresponsible and all-powerful despot, bear-

⁴⁶ *Strabo, India, sect. 55. In the Hindu drama of Sakuntala, Raja Dushyanta is represented as being attended in the chase by Yavana women, with bows in their hands, and wearing garlands of wild flowers. Professor Monier William's translation, Act II. Scene 1.*

⁴⁷ *Megasthenes in Athenæus, Book IV, c. 39.*

ing a closer resemblance to a Tartar monarch, like Chinghiz or Timour, than to a Rajpoot suzerain like Porus. But before entering more minutely into these marks of difference, it will be necessary to indicate the social structure and political administration of the great Gangetic empire.

RYOTS OR CULTIVATORS

The mass of the population, and the main support of the state, consisted of the husbandmen or cultivators, who answered to the modern Ryots. These cultivators were servants of the Raja. In other words, the Raja was not merely the sovereign of his dominions, but the actual proprietor of the land in the European sense of the word; and the Ryots cultivated this land as labourers, and received a share of the produce as wages. Thus a large proportion of the produce of the empire was stored up every year in the royal granaries, and partly sold to the trading and manufacturing classes, and partly devoted to the maintenance of the army and civil administration.⁴⁸ Meantime the Ryots were apparently happy and contented. "They are," says Megasthenes, "a most mild and gentle people. They never resort to the cities either to transact business, or to take a part in public tumults. They are exempted from all military service, and pursue their labours free from all alarm. Indeed it often happens that at the same time, and in the same part of the country, the army is engaged in fighting the enemy, whilst the husbandmen are sowing and ploughing in the utmost security."⁴⁹

TRADERS AND ARTISANS

The second important class, which also contributed to the support of the state, was composed of the traders and artisans. All the members of this class carried on their several avocations under a system of official surveillance; as a tax was levied on every sale, and a stated service was required from every artisan. This was not in accordance with the European idea that tradesmen and mechanics should contribute to the support of the state in return for the protection they received; but originated in the Asiatic idea, that they should pay their lord and master, either in money or service, for the privilege of pursuing their several avocations within his dominions. The manufacturers of arms and builders of ships came under a different category. They were employed solely by the Raja, and worked for no one else;

⁴⁸ *This process of storing up the grain must have checked famine.*

⁴⁹ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 40. He states that the Ryot's share was only one-fourth. This must be a mistake.*

and they were paid for their services both in money and produce. The arms thus manufactured were stored up in the royal magazines; and were supplied to the soldiers by the commander-in-chief as occasion required, and returned to the magazines when the expedition was over. The ships that were constructed by the royal ship-builders were in like manner placed in the charge of the admiral of the royal navy, who hired them out to any merchant who might require shipping for the purposes of traffic.⁵⁰

The third class consisted of the soldiers, who formed a standing army supported by the king. When not engaged on active service, they are said to have spent their time in idleness and drinking. But they were always ready to start on an expedition; for they had only to attend in person, and were furnished with all that was required throughout the campaign. Horses and elephants were returned to the royal stables after every expedition. Every elephant carried four men on his back; the driver and three archers. Every chariot carried three men; the driver, and two fighting men. These chariots were only drawn by horses on the field of battle. On the march they were drawn by oxen, whilst the horses were led by a halter, so that their spirit might not be damped, or their legs chafed and inflamed, before going into action.⁵¹

SAGES OR PHILOSOPHERS

The fourth class was composed of the so-called philosophers, some of whom were gymono-sophistae, or "naked philosophers." Under this general head of philosophers are evidently included both Brahmans and Buddhist monks; and the notices which have been recorded by Megasthenes, although somewhat confused, are worthy of particular consideration. "The philosophers," says Megasthenes, "are the smallest in number of all the castes, but they are the highest in rank. They are sometimes engaged by private persons to perform sacrifices and other public rites. But they are also employed by the Raja in a public capacity, to collect any useful information which may tend to the improvement of the earth, or of the animals who live upon the earth, or conduce to the advantage of the state.

⁵⁰ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 46. The present Burmese government is of a somewhat similar character. The king has on occasions sought to be the only trader and manufacturer in his dominions.*

⁵¹ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sects. 47, 52.*

THE GREAT ASSEMBLY

At the beginning of every new year they attend the king at the gate, and form what is called the Great Assembly; and those who have made any discoveries, and committed them to writing, are expected on such occasions to declare them publicly. Those whose observations are found to be correct are exempted for life from all contributions or tribute. But those whose observations are found to be incorrect, are prohibited, after the third attempt, from publishing any further information."⁵²

REIGN OF SANDROKOTTOS: A TRANSITION PERIOD

The foregoing account of the Great Assembly throws a further light upon the new forms of religious thought, which were slowly fermenting on the banks of the Ganges. It was a transition period between the age of animal sacrifice and the age of benevolence and humanity. The Raja still offered sacrifice, and indulged in the pleasures of the chase; and no doubt continued to eat flesh meat, dressed in the fashion which Megasthenes has described. But he was already being brought under the influence of the reforming spirit of the age. He utilized the philosophers, or learned class, by engaging them in the work of experiment and observation, with the view of ascertaining what would improve the productions of the earth, and especially the condition of animals, for whom all believers in the metempsychosis had a tender regard. At the same time the philosophers were also to ascertain what would tend to the advantage of the government. Such were the matters which were publicly declared and discussed in the presence of the Raja, at the Great Assembly which was held at the commencement of every new year.

DIVISION OF THE PHILOSOPHERS INTO BRAHAMANS AND GERMANES (SRAMANS)

The philosophers were divided by Megasthenes into two distinct communities, the Brahmans and the Germanes (or Sramans), which will be found hereafter to correspond to the Brahman sages and the Buddhist monks. But he seems to intimate that both classes were alike employed upon the public duty of developing the resources of the country, and improving the condition of animals. Indeed it may be inferred from his observations that neither Brahmans nor Sramans were at this period devoted so entirely to religious study and contemplation as the later literature of both communities would seem to imply.

⁵² *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 39.*

Strangely enough he preferred the Brahmans to the Sramans; but upon this point it will be better to submit his views in full.

LIFE OF THE BRAHMAN SAGES

"The Brahmans," says Megasthenes, "are held in higher repute than the Germanes, because they are better agreed as to their opinions. From their earliest infancy they pass under the charge of a succession of guardians and preceptors suitable to their advancing years. They dwell in a grove in the front of the city, within an enclosure of moderate size. There they live on frugal fare, abstain from all animal food, and lead lives of celibacy. They spend their time in grave discourse, and are ready to converse with all who listen with respect; but should any one interrupt the discourse by speaking, coughing, or any other noise, he is at once expelled from their society on the ground that he cannot maintain sufficient self-control. After the expiration of thirty-seven years, a Brahman is permitted to return to secular life, to wear fine robes and gold rings, and to marry as many wives as he pleases.⁵³ But such Brahmans do not teach their philosophy to their wives, lest the women should become depraved, and divulge things which ought to be concealed.⁵⁴

"The Brahmans chiefly discourse respecting death. They believe that death to them is only a birth into a real and happy life. They discipline themselves to prepare for death. They teach that ideas of happiness or misery are only illusion of the imagination, inasmuch as the same circumstances will affect the same individual sometimes with joy and at other times with sorrow.⁵⁵

DOCTRINE OF THE SUPREME SPIRIT

"In some of their speculations regarding physical phenomena, the Brahmans display a childish simplicity. At the same time they hold several of the same doctrines which are current among the Greeks. They teach that the world is generated and destructible, and of a spherical figure; and that the god who made it, and governs it, also pervades the whole of it. They believe that the earth is situated in the centre of the universe and that water was the chief element in its formation. They have peculiar ideas of the soul, and the principle of generation.

⁵³ *This is certainly opposed to the division of the life of a Brahman into four ages, as laid down by Manu.*

⁵⁴ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 59.*

⁵⁵ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 59.*

They also invent fables, after the manner of Plato, respecting the immortality of the soul and the punishment in Hades.⁵⁶

QUESTION OF SELF-DESTRUCTION

"These philosophers do not maintain the dogma of self-destruction. On the contrary, they consider that those who commit this act are fool-hardy. Those who are severe by nature will wound themselves, or cast themselves down precipices. Those who are impatient of pain drown themselves. Those who are of ardent tempers throw themselves into the fire. Kalanos belonged to this last class; he had no control over himself, and was a slave to the table of Alexander."⁵⁷

GREEK OPINIONS OF THE BRAHMANS

The remarks of Megasthenes respecting the Bra'hmans are valuable as the impartial description furnished by a competent eye-witness. He considered that they occupied a higher position than the other philosophers, apparently because they were comparatively free from those sectarian and schismatic disputes which were agitating the Buddhist communities. The Greek ambassador admired the Brahmanical philosophy, which was in accordance with the systems taught in the schools of Pythagoras and Socrates; but he was sufficiently imbued with the free-thinking spirit of the age, to deride their religious views as regards a future state, as being based upon fables rather than upon experience.

⁵⁶ Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 59.

⁵⁷ Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 68. The remarks of Megasthenes with reference to the suicide of Kalanos are very obscure. He evidently failed to apprehend the ideas which prompted the recreant old Brahman to commit such horrible self-martyrdom. According to the Vedic idea Fire was a deity who purified and refined; it was also a divine messenger, who carried the sacrifice to the gods. Kalanos had forfeited his position in the eyes of his fellow Brahmans. He had lost caste by following Alexander out of Indian territory. He was seventy-three years of age when he was attacked by disease for the first time. Death by fire relieved him from all the terrors of pain and old age, and purified his soul from every sin, and carried it away to the abode of the gods.

In the Ramayana a story is told of a sage, named Sarabhanga, who committed a similar act of self-martyrdom, which enabled him to throw off his mortal body as a serpent casts its slough, and to assume the form of perpetual youth. History, vol. ii., Ramayana, chap. 15.

GREEK OPINIONS OF THE BUDDHIST MONKS

As regards the Germanes (or Buddhist monks⁵⁸), Megasthenes seems to have derived his information from their opponents. He speaks of them as being of inferior repute to the Brāhmins. The most honourable were a class of hermits who dwelt in the forests, and subsisted on leaves and wild fruits. They abstained from wine, and led lives of celibacy. The Raja was accustomed to consult them by means of messengers. Next in estimation was a class of physicians, who were engaged in the study of the nature of man. They lived frugally on rice and meal, which were freely supplied by the masses.⁵⁹ It will be seen hereafter that these physicians played an important part in the practical system of Buddhism which finds expression in the edicts of Asoka.

THREE EXTRA CASTES DESCRIBED BY MEGASTHENES

The four great castes of the Hindu' people have now been brought under review ; namely,—husbandmen, tradesmen, soldiers, and philosophers. Generally speaking, they correspond to the four castes of Brahmanical law ; namely,—Su'dras, Vaisyas, Kshatriyas, and Brāhmins. But Megasthenes distributes the people of India into seven castes, by adding three other classes which, however, are not castes properly so called ; namely,—shepherds, inspectors, and officers of state.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *It is a disputed point whether the Germanes or Sramans were Buddhists or Jains. The point is of little consequence in dealing with broad currents of religious thought. The Jains were originally a sect of Buddhists. Their chief saint Parisnath flourished B.C. 200. They have twenty-four saints ; the Buddhists have only seven Buddhas in the present universe. The Jains have caste ; the Buddhists none. Both ignore deity.*

⁵⁹ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 60. Kleitarchos, who accompanied Alexander to the Punjab, furnishes accounts of a class of philosophers whom he called Pramnæ (Kleitarchos in Strabo, India, sect. 70, 71). He speaks of them as a contentious class who opposed the Brahmins, and derided them for occupying themselves with the study of physiology and astronomy. These Pramnæ are sometimes identified with the Buddhists, but if so they could scarcely have been the hermits who lived in remote forests, nor the physicians who studied the nature of man. Possibly they may have been ordinary Buddhist monks, who scorned all pursuits excepting those connected with religion.*

⁶⁰ *It appears strange that Megasthenes should have divided the people of India into seven castes. Practically the number of castes in*

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTERS

The shepherds included hunters, and were certainly not a caste of Hindus. They were nomades dwelling in tents, and were probably of Tartar origin. Their avocations were precisely those which a Brahmanical people, who revolted at the idea of slaughter, or even of trading in animals, would naturally leave as a monopoly in the hands of foreigners. The regular occupation of these shepherds was breeding cattle, and selling or letting out beasts of burden; and no other class in the kingdom was allowed to engage in this cattle trade. They also gained a subsistence by hunting. They were employed by the king to destroy the wild animals and birds which infested the sown fields; and for this public duty they received an allowance of corn from the royal granaries.⁶¹ The inspectors and officers of state must in like manner be excluded from the number of hereditary castes.

India is endless; every little trade and profession forming a hereditary caste of its own, out of which its members may not marry. But all these nondescript castes are supposed to be included in one or other of the four great castes, or are referred to the pariah or outcaste population.

Herodotus, however (ii. 91), had divided the people of Egypt into seven castes; namely,—priests, soldiers, herdsmen, swineherds, tradesmen, interpreters, and steersmen; and Megasthenes may therefore have taken it for granted that there were seven castes in India. It is a curious fact that from the time of Alexander's expedition to a comparatively recent date, geographers and others have continually drawn analogies between Egypt and India. Egypt was watered by the Nile; India was watered by the Indus. The Nile produced crocodiles; the Indus produced alligators. The Nile had a delta; so had the Indus. Beans grew in Egypt, and beans grew in the Punjab. The same animals were to be found in Egypt and India. The people of Ethiopia were darker complexioned than the people of Egypt; and the people of southern India were darker complexioned than the people of northern India. Sometimes the analogy failed. The hair of the Ethiopians was crisp and woolly; that of the southern Hindus was straight and glossy. Strabo ascribed this to difference of climate; the atmosphere of southern India being more humid than that of Ethiopia. The humid climate, however, only prevailed on the western coast of Malabar; Strabo knew nothing of the eastern coast of Coromandel, where the air is singularly dry.

Strabo divides the people of Egypt into three castes only; namely, husbandmen, soldiers, and priests. Egypt, sect. 3.

⁶¹ Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 41.

They were merely individuals, some of whom were Brahmans, who were selected to fill particular and responsible posts.⁶²

INSPECTORS

The internal administration of the Gangetic kingdom was conducted by inspectors, who seem to have also acted as magistrates. Some were appointed to the city, some to the camp, and some to the districts or provinces. Their duty as inspectors was to collect full information respecting every movement that was going on, and to send private reports to the king. Their duty as magistrates combined the ordinary routine of the executive, with other measures of supervision and surveillance which are of an essentially oriental character.⁶³

SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE

The duties of inspection may be summed up in the one word "espionage." The inspectors comprised the best and most faithful servants of the government; but they were little more than spies and informers. The public women, as in most Asiatic cities, furnished the best information; and thus the metropolitan inspectors employed the city courtezans, whilst the army inspectors employed the female camp followers. In all Asiatic states the work of espionage forms an important element in the administration. It is not perhaps so necessary in principalities where political or feudal ties have any existence, such as in the older Rajput kingdoms. But the majority of Asiatic principalities are mere congeries of villages and families, which may be strong as separate and individual communities, but have never been wielded together into a single nationality, bound together by a common sense of mutual interests or patriotic sentiments. Under such circumstances the most searching system of espionage is necessary to guard against sudden outbreaks, mutinies, or revolutions which at any moment might overturn a throne; and it was not confined to bazars and camps, but often penetrated into the inner domestic life of citizens and soldiers.⁶⁴

⁶² *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 49. The shepherds corresponded to the Chandalas.*

⁶³ *Megasthenes in Strabo, India, sect. 50.*

⁶⁴ *In the present day this system of espionage is not a political necessity in the states which are included within the limits of the British Indian empire; because the feudatory princes are more or less guaranteed against war and rebellion by the strong arm of the paramount power. But in a native state, like upper Burma, which has not as yet been brought under the system of subsidiary alliances, and*

SURVEILLANCE OF TRADE AND MANUFACTURES

The duties of the inspectors, as magistrates and executive officers, implied a strict surveillance over all the manufactures and commerce of the kingdom; ostensibly perhaps to ensure good workmanship, and prevent fraud; but in reality for the purpose of levying a tax, amounting to one-tenth of the price of every article.

DUTIES OF THE SIX DIVISIONS OF CITY INSPECTORS

The inspectors, or magistrates of the city, were formed into six divisions, each of which consisted of five officials. One division maintained a close supervision over the working of all arts and manufactures. A second division presided over the sale of all such articles, to prevent old goods from being sold as new ones. A third division presided over all sales and exchanges in produce. This division apparently comprised royal brokers, who received the produce from the royal granaries, after the payment of the share to the cultivators; and then supplied it to the retailers in the bazars, and maintained a supervision over the trade. They took charge of the measures that were employed, and allowed no one individual to deal in various kinds of articles, unless he paid double rates of taxation on all his sales. A fourth division collected the tax for the king, which, as already stated, amounted to one-tenth of the price of the article sold; and any attempt at fraud in the payment of this tax was punished by death. A fifth division registered all births and deaths, with every particular of time and place, for the twofold object of levying a tax, and punishing any concealment. A sixth division entertained all strangers or foreigners, who came as envoys or might possibly be spies.⁶⁵ They furnished such visitors with

which has been the theatre of plots, insurrections, and revolutions for centuries, a system of espionage is naturally extended over the whole kingdom, and bears a strong resemblance to that which prevailed in the old Gangetic empire. A chronic terror pervades the court and palace at Mandalay, corresponding to that which pervaded the court and palace at Patali-putra. The king never ventures out of his palace for years at a time, lest in his absence a rebellion should break out within the palace walls, and a recreant prince should obtain possession of the throne.

⁶⁵ *In the modern administration of upper Burma royal officers perform duties very similar to those described by Megasthenes. Some officials under the Kampat Woongye are in charge of manufactures; others act as royal brokers for the sale of produce; whilst an official, known as the Kulla Woon, is especially appointed to receive and*

suitable lodgings, and appointed attendants ostensibly to wait upon them, but really to observe their mode of life and duly report their actions. If one of the strangers happened to fall sick, this division of magistrates took special care of him; and if he died they buried him, and took charge of his property.⁶⁶

COLLECTIVE DUTIES OF CITY INSPECTORS

In addition to these special duties appertaining to each division, the city magistrates performed other duties in their collective capacity. They took charge of the markets, harbours, and temples; they repaired all public works when necessary; and they fixed the prices of all articles and commodities that were sold in the shops and bazars.⁶⁷

ARMY INSPECTORS

The army inspectors, or magistrates, were in like manner formed into six divisions, each of which consisted of five persons. One division was associated with the chief superintendent of the royal navy, and made all the necessary arrangement for water transport. A second division was associated with the officer in charge of the bullock trains, and made similar arrangement for the land transport of military engines, arms, commissariat for men and beasts, and other necessities for the army. This division also furnished army attendants, such as grooms, mechanists, and beaters of drums and gongs; for they despatched foragers for grass by the sound of the gong. The third division had charge of what was necessary for the infantry. A fourth division had charge of what was necessary for the cavalry. A fifth division took care of the chariots. A sixth division saw after the elephants.⁶⁸

DISTRICT INSPECTORS

The duties of the inspectors, or magistrates, in the districts are but slightly touched upon. The Greek ambassador probably found more difficulty in collecting information from the provinces, than in obtaining it at the capital. Some of the district officers had charge of the rivers, and measured the land, as was

entertain strangers. In former days, a tax amounting to one-tenth of the price of the article was levied on all goods imported by sea in the Burma dominions. F. Sangermano's description of the Burman empire.

⁶⁶ Strabo, *India*, sect. 51.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Strabo, *India*, sect. 52.

done in Egypt. In other words, they observed the effect of the yearly inundations during the rainy season. Others inspected the great tanks or reservoirs, from which water was distributed by canals; so that all might have an equal share in the irrigation.⁶⁹ Others, again, superintended the shepherds and hunters, and rewarded those who kept the fields clear of birds and vermin, whilst punishing those who neglected their duties. They collected the taxes, and superintended all the various work-people who were engaged in connection with the land, such as wood-cutters, carpenters, workers in brass, and miners generally. They also superintended the public roads, and placed pillars at intervals of every ten stadia, or about a mile and a quarter, to indicate the by-ways and distances.⁷⁰

OFFICERS OF STATE

The so-called seventh caste, including officers of state, must be dismissed with a bare notice. Megasthenes merely states that the seventh caste consisted of counsellors and assessors of the king; and that to these persons belonged the offices of state, the tribunals of justice, and the whole administration of affairs.⁷¹

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GANGETIC EMPIRE COMPARED WITH THAT OF BURMA

The administration of the Gangetic empire thus described by Megasthenes, bears a remarkable resemblance to the native administration of the existing kingdom of upper Burma, or Ava. In both cases there is an entire absence of either an aristocratic element, or a popular one. The administration is composed of mere officials, whose title and position wholly depend upon the will of the sovereign. In Burma it is a mere bureaucracy without any hereditary influence or political training. Every official is profoundly obsequious to the reigning sovereign, whether he be the rightful prince or a usurper; and consequently revolutionary attempts to subvert a king are of comparatively frequent occurrence, as, if successful, they neither affect the administration nor the masses of the population.⁷²

⁶⁹ *This observation seems to militate against a previous statement that all the land belonged to the king as sole proprietor. But seeing that the cultivators received a share of the produce as wages, it may be supposed that they were personally interested in the yearly out-turn of grain.*

⁷⁰ *Strabo, India, sect. 50.*

⁷¹ *Ibid. 49.*

⁷² *Perhaps the best published account of Burma and its constitu-*

ADAPTATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO THE HINDU
POPULATION

But notwithstanding the apparent defects in the administration of the Gangetic empire, it seems to have been adapted to the people of the country. It was an irresponsible despotism, but of a paternal character; and it was feared and obeyed by a population, who have hitherto been supposed to be as unfitted as children for the exercise of any political independence, or share in the administration outside their own village or family community. It has already been seen that Megasthenes praises the cultivators, who formed the bulk of the population, as being the most gentle and contented in the world. He even expatiates on the orderly conduct of the camp, and the absence of the crime of theft, in a standing army of four hundred thousand men. Of the people of India generally, he says that they are happy because of the simplicity of their manners and their frugal mode of life. They had but one extravagance, and that was a love of ornament which to this day is a characteristic of all classes of the community. They never drank wine, excepting at sacrifices.⁷³ Their ordinary beverage was made from rice. Their food consisted of what he calls rice-pottage, which no

tion is to be found in Father Sangermano's description of the Burmese empire, printed at Rome, in 1833, for the Oriental Translation Society. The Father spent twenty-six years in Burma, and the author has been enabled to test his information, and supplement it with additional notes, during a voyage from Rangoon via Ava, Amarapura, and Mandalay, to the remote town of Bhamo, on the frontier of Burma towards China, a distance of some thousand miles up the river Irrawaddy.

The general resemblance between the courts of Patali-putra and Mandalay is so striking that it is easy to conjecture that the court in which king Sandroktos sat as judge was the Hlot-dau, the Lutto of Sangermano, in which the king occupied the principal seat, and the ministers sat as counsellors or assessors.

The Hlot-dau, or supreme council of Ava, exercises all the powers of a senate, a high court, and a cabinet. Its functions are legislative, judicial, and executive. As a senate, it might veto any act or order of the king. As a high court of civil and criminal justice, it tries all important cases, and is the highest court of appeal. As a cabinet, it exercises all the powers of government; and every order of the king is issued by the Hlot-dau in the name of the ministers of whom the court is composed. In the present day, however, it is the shadow without the substance of a constitution.

⁷³ *This wine was probably the soma juice of the Vedic hymns.*

doubt corresponded to rice and curry. Their laws were so simple that they had few lawsuits, and none whatever in the case of pledges and deposits. They required neither witnesses nor seals, but made their deposits and confided in one another. Even their houses and property were unguarded. Megasthenes adds that they had no written laws, and were even ignorant of writing, and regulated everything by memory. This statement must be accepted with some reservation. The Brahmans certainly possessed a sacred literature, but they would never have produced their books to the Greek ambassador; and if questioned concerning them, would have denied their existence, as the easiest way of escaping from the difficulty. Indeed Nearchos, who accompanied Alexander to the Punjab, distinctly states that the people wrote letters upon cloth, which was smoothed for the purpose by being well beaten.⁷⁴

AUTHENTICITY OF THE GREEK PICTURES OF ANCIENT INDIA

The pictures of ancient India, which are thus furnished by the Greeks, are valuable as much for their realism as for their authenticity. They utterly invalidate the gross exaggerations of the Sanskrit epics, whilst clearing away much of the haze which surrounds the legendary life of Sakya Muni. They do not exhibit an advanced stage of civilization, like that which will hereafter be found reflected in the Hindu drama; and indeed it may be inferred that as yet the Hindu drama had no existence, for no mention is made of theatrical entertainments of any kind. Again, the court of Sandrokottos was not a centre of literary culture, like the courts of the later Hindu sovereigns; for Megasthenes makes no allusion to wits or philosophers, poets or story-tellers, displaying their talents or accomplishments under the patronage of a munificent Raja. On the contrary, the royal residence at Patali-putra was a mere fortified palace in which the Raja dwelt in strict seclusion, surrounded only by women; and the chief pleasure in which he indulged outside his palace was that of hunting in the company of armed females. Strabo considered that these royal excursions resembled the joyous processions of the worshippers of Dionysos; but in reality they were simply hunting expeditions, in which the Raja was protected by a body-guard of amazons. The so-called literati or philosophers of ancient India, are described as mere religious recluses, dwelling in groves outside the cities, where they taught a strange metaphysical religion, and practised still stranger rites and austerities.

⁷⁴ *Nearchos in Strabo, India, sect. 67.*

REVIEW OF THE GREEK ACCOUNTS OF THE RYOTS

The information supplied by Megasthenes as regards the agricultural class, who are represented by the modern Ryots, is more pleasing, but equally realistic. As already seen, the husbandmen were the main support of the government and the vast standing army; but their condition could have been little better than that of serfs, who cultivated the whole area of arable land as the royal domain, and received a share of the harvest for their maintenance.⁷⁵ They were, however, happy and contented. It may therefore be inferred that they were not exposed to unnecessary interference, so long as they did their duty to the land. They were simple in their wants, and probably domestic in their lives. They knew nothing of politics; and they took no part in rebellions or revolutions. From time immemorial they had doubtless been brought up in the hereditary belief that all the land belonged to the Raja, that they were his servants, and that their primary duty was to cultivate the soil for his benefit; and this humble status they appear to have accepted with that blind ignorance which often constitutes material happiness. When the harvest was abundant, their share sufficed for all their wants; and in exceptional times of drought or famine, it is only natural to suppose, that as servants of the Raja, they could be supplied with food from the royal granaries, in the same way that the elephants and horses of the Raja received their daily rations. They married wives, and they became fathers of families; and if a great part of their time was devoted to labour in the fields, they doubtless had their times of holiday, and celebrated the same festivals which they still observe. Under such circumstances they would decorate themselves, and indeed the whole village, with garlands of flowers, not forgetting the trees, the temples, and the images of the gods; and then with the aid of some Brahman they would offer their little sacrifices, and feast on such simple delicacies as

⁷⁵ *The evidence of the Greek ambassador as to the respective shares of the Raja and the Ryot is deserving of consideration. He says that the share of the cultivator was only one-fourth; consequently the royal share must have been three-fourths. According to the concurrent testimony of the sacred books of the Brahmans, and the narratives of the two Chinese pilgrims Fah-Hian and Hiouen-Thsang, the Raja only received one-sixth of the produce. Perhaps the Raja received three-fourths of the produce from his own special demesnes, which were cultivated by serfs; and one-sixth of the produce of all the lands throughout his empire, which were cultivated by the Ryots.*

their wives could prepare. Such scenes of rural life are not unknown to modern India, although they are often alloyed by superstitious fear or priestly rapacity. But the Indian Ryots had one advantage over the agricultural population of almost every other country. They were not liable to military conscription. Indeed at no period of history do they seem to have been forced from their homes, and compelled to serve in the armies of the state. Megasthenes describes the soldier class as already forming an army of four hundred thousand men; and according to his account the Ryots were always regarded as non-combatants. Hostile armies might be fighting in their neighbourhood, but the Ryots went on ploughing and sowing, utterly regardless, and perhaps unconscious, of the work of slaughter that was going on around.⁷⁶

CHARACTER OF THE SUPERVISION OVER TRADES AND ARTISANS

Megasthenes furnishes no information respecting the traders and artisans, excepting that they were subjected to an official supervision which seems to have amounted to oppression. Indeed such a system had a tendency to fetter all trade, whilst opening every avenue to corruption. But it is quite in accordance with Asiatic ideas. Indeed to this day the Hindus have proved themselves patient under every interference and exaction, provided only that nothing is done contrary to custom. It is the novelty of a measure which excites their suspicion and alarm, and occasionally drives them to acts of resistance or turbulence. It is therefore easy to infer that traders and artisans were reconciled to a system of supervision and extortion, under which perhaps they could in their turn purchase permission to charge a higher price or dispose of an inferior article.

RETICENCE OF MEGASTHENES AS REGARDS POLITICS AND RELIGION

Upon some points Megasthenes is strangely reticent. Thus he only describes the external machinery of civil and military

⁷⁶ *Megasthenes must have been all the more surprised at this immunity of the Indian cultivators, because during the Peloponnesian war hostilities generally commenced with the destruction of the standing corn of the enemy. But in the primitive religions of the Hindus, in which the earth was especially deified as the goddess of fecundity, such a proceeding would probably have been regarded as a species of sacrilege.*

administration, and furnishes no information as regards politics or wars. Possibly he may have been deterred by diplomatic considerations from dwelling upon such topics; or he may have assumed that they would prove of but little interest in the western centres of Greek civilization. The religion of the Hindus seems scarcely to have excited his curiosity. Had Herodotus travelled in India, as he travelled in Egypt, he would no doubt have minutely described the several deities, with their temples and forms of worship; but he flourished in an earlier age, when religion was still the foundation of all intellectual culture. Megasthenes, on the contrary, was apparently imbued with the materialism of a later and rationalistic age, when reverence for popular deities was dying out in Hellas, and the Hindu sacrifices to their gods would be regarded with a pitying smile. Megasthenes certainly expresses the opinion that the Brahmans were in better repute than the Sramans, but he does not appear to have compared their dogmas. He simply saw that the Brahmans agreed in their opinions, whilst the Sramans were always wrangling.⁷⁷

GREEK IGNORANCE OF BENGAL

It seems somewhat extraordinary that neither the Greeks nor the Romans knew anything of Bengal. They had acquired a certain stock of information respecting the Punjab, and the Gangetic valley as far as Patna, or Patali-putra, but they had never made their way through Bengal as far as the mouths of the Ganges. They had some knowledge of the western coast of India from the mouths of the Indus to the island of Ceylon;⁷⁸ but the eastern coast of Coromandel, and indeed the whole of the Bay of Bengal, was utterly unknown. Starbo, who flourished at the commencement of the Christian era, was conscious of this want of information. The Indian trade was carried on from Alexandria, via the river Nile and old Suez canal, as far as the western shores of India; but, as Strabo himself says, very few of the merchants from Egypt ever succeeded in reaching the

⁷⁷ *This opinion of Megasthenes as regards the contentious character of the Buddhist monks is of more value than might be expected. Notwithstanding the superiority of their moral tenets, they are a most disputatious set; and unless kept within the strict area of orthodoxy by superior ecclesiastical authority, are prone to fall into heresy. Such was their character in the latter days of Sakya Muni, and such is their present character on the banks of the Irrawaddy.*

⁷⁸ *Strabo, India, sects. 14, 15.*

Ganges; and those who did were so ignorant, as to be quite unqualified to furnish an account of the places they had visited.⁷⁹

EMBASSY OF PANDION OR PORUS TO AUGUSTUS CÆSAR

One authentic story has been preserved of an embassy sent by an Indian prince, named Pandion or Porus, which is invested with historic interest. This Porus was probably a representative of the same old family of Puru, to which the former Porus belonged who had been defeated by Alexander some three centuries previously.⁸⁰ It is easy to conceive that rumours of

⁷⁹ Strabo, *India*, sect. 4. The yearly voyages undertaken by the Roman merchants between Egypt and western India are sufficiently described by Pliny (vi. 26). The voyage out lasted about seventy days; that is, thirty days from Egypt to Ocelis, the modern Gehla, on the south-western corner of Arabia; and forty days from Ocelis to Muziris, probably the modern Mangalore, on the western coast of India. The Indian Ocean was at this period infested by pirates, who seem to have had strongholds on the Malabar coast, especially in the neighbourhood of Muziris. Accordingly every Roman ship carried a company of archers on board. Muziris was also undesirable on account of the distance from the roadstead to the port, which rendered it necessary to carry all cargoes for loading and discharging on board canoes. Barace, possibly the modern Baroche, was thus considered a more convenient port. It is said to have been situated in the kingdom of Pandya or Pandion. The pepper of Cothinara, probably the modern Cochin, was brought to Barace in canoes.

Two important marts on the western coast are also mentioned by Ptolemy, namely, Plithana and Tagara. Plithana has been identified with Paitan, on the river Godavari, the capital of Salivahana, whose era, corresponding to A.D. 77, is still maintained throughout the Dekhan. The name of Tagara still lingers in that of Deoghur, the later capital of Maharashtra, at present known as Dowlatabad.

⁸⁰ A dynasty of Rajas, known as the Pandyan dynasty, appears to have reigned over a kingdom also called Pandya, which formerly occupied the whole of the south-eastern quarter of the Peninsula, and had its capital at the town of Madura. It has accordingly been conjectured that it was one of these Pandya Rajas who sent the embassy to Augustus. It seems almost impossible that any Indian sovereign in such a remote quarter, could either hope for an alliance with the Roman emperor, or even suppose that Augustus could desire to march a Roman army through his dominions. On the other hand, the tradition of the invasion of Alexander the Great would still be preserved in the Punjab; and the reigning Porus might readily arrive

the victory at Actium, the conquest of Egypt, and the greatness of imperial Rome, would reach the shores of Western India, and inspire a powerful Raja, like Porus, with a desire, not unknown amongst Asiatic princes, to secure a powerful ally from the western world.⁸¹ Porus sent a letter to Augustus Caesar, stating that he was sovereign over six hundred Rajas, and earnestly desired the friendship of the Roman emperor; and that he would permit a Roman army to march through his dominions and render assistance in any expedition that was just.

at the conclusion that Augustus Cæsar was another Alexander. Moreover it will be seen hereafter that the embassy was accompanied by a priest, either a Brahman or a Sraman, from Baroche on the western coast at the mouth of the Nerbudda. Such a man might easily have found his way to the Punjab; but it would have been hard for him to have reached Madura.

It is not, however, impossible that an ancient empire, extending over an undefined region in the west and south, may have been nominally ruled by Pandya Rajas, who were representatives of the house of Porus or Pandion, and had some connection with the Pandavas mentioned in the Maha Bharata. Both Arrian and Pliny have preserved traditions of such a Pandyan empire. Herakles is said to have had an only daughter, named Pandæa, whom he subsequently married, and thus became the father of a race of Pandya sovereigns. Arrian also states that Herakles gave Pandæa a kingdom bearing her name (India, chaps. viii. and ix.). Pliny adds that this is the only kingdom throughout India which is ruled by women (vi. 23); but that there are kings of other nations, who were descended from Pandæa. Traces of this Amazonian empire are undoubtedly to be found amongst the Malabars on the western coast to this day (see History, vol. i., part ii., Maha Bharata, chap. xvi., note 17). Colonel Tod has pointed out an analogy in the legend of the birth of Pandu (compare Rajasthan, vol. i., page 30).

⁸¹ *This passion of eastern princes to form remote alliances under certain circumstances amounts to a political instinct. It is generally developed by immediate danger, an utter ignorance of European power, and an overweening sense of their own importance. Thus in the sixteenth century one Indian prince sent an embassy to the Great Turk to assist him against the Portuguese. In the last century Tippoo Sultan of Mysore opened up negotiations with the first Napoleon in the hope of obtaining assistance against the English. In our own time Theodore of Abyssinia, the present king of Burma, and the Panthay Sultan of Talifoo, have each sought to form alliances with European powers. Still more strangely Florus mentions (iv. 12) that ambassadors from China came to Augustus Cæsar.*

This letter was written in Greek upon a skin, and contained the names of the ambassadors who were sent with it; from which it appeared that on reaching Roman territory they had all died excepting three. The presents consisted of a man born without arms, some large snakes, one serpent ten cubits long, a river tortoise three cubits long, and a so-called partridge said to be larger than a vulture. The servants of the embassy included eight men who appeared naked with girdles round their waists,⁸² and were fragrant with perfumes. A holy man, either a Brahman or a Sraman, accompanied the embassy. Nothing further is known of this extra-ordinary mission, excepting that the letter and presents were duly made over to the Roman authorities. The holy man proceeded to Athens, probably from a natural curiosity to learn something of Greek philosophy. His conduct there must have created a profound sensation amongst the sages of the academy.

SUICIDE OF AN INDIAN SAGE

He declared that as his life had been hitherto one of unvaried success, he intended to escape from existence in order to avoid unexpected calamity. The idea had been familiar to the Greeks since the days of Cræsus and Periander, but they must have been surprised at seeing it realized in fact. The Indian sage prepared a pyre, and then naked, anointed, with his girdle round his waist, and a smile upon his countenance, he leaped upon the pile and perished in the flames.⁸³

⁸² *This was the cord worn by the three highest castes, viz. Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas. See History, vol. ii., pages 529, 545.*

⁸³ *Strabo, India, sect. 73. The following inscription is said to have been set up over the tomb of the Hindu philosopher:—“Zarmano-chegas, an Indian, a native of Bargosa, having immortalized himself according to the custom of his country, here lies.”*

The name “Zarmano,” seems to imply that he was one of the Germanes, or Sramans. Dion Cassius (ix.) calls him Zarmanus. The word “Chegas” has been identified with Sheik. Bargosa is apparently a corruption of Barygaza, the modern Baroche.

CHAPTER XI

BUDDHISM IN INDIA : 543 B.C. TO 1000 A.D.

By W. W. HUNTER

The first great solvent of Brahmanism was the teaching of Gautama Buddha. The life of this celebrated man has three sides,—its personal aspects, its legendary developments, and its religious consequences upon mankind. In his own person, Buddha appears as a prince and preacher of ancient India. In the legendary developments of his story, Buddha ranks as a divine teacher among his followers, as an incarnation of Vishnu among the Hindus, and as a saint of the Christian church, with a day assigned to him in both the Greek and Roman calendars. As a religious founder, he left behind a system of belief which has gained more disciples than any other creed in the world; and which is now more or less accepted by 500 millions of people, or nearly one-half the human race. According to the Pali texts, Buddha was born 622 B.C., and died 543 B.C.¹ Modern calculations fix his death about 478 B.C.²

THE STORY OF BUDDHA, MODELLED ON THE EPIC TYPE

The story of Buddha's earthly career is a typical one. It is based on the old Indian ideal of the noble life which we have seen depicted in the Sanskrit epics. Like the Pandavas in the Mahabharata, and like Rama in the Ramayana, Buddha is the miraculously born son of a king, belonging to one of the two great Aryan lines, the Solar and the Lunar; in Buddha's case, as in Rama's, to the Solar. His youth, like that of the epic heroes, is spent under Brahman tutors, and, like the epic heroes, he obtains a beautiful bride after a display of unexpected prowess with the bow; or, as the northern Buddhists relate, at an actual *Swayam-vara*, by a contest in arms for the princess. A period of voluntary exile follows an interval of married

¹ Childers' *Dictionary of the Pali Language*, s. v. *Buddho*, p. 96. The accepted traditional dates of Indian Buddhism are followed in this chapter.

² General Cunningham's *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, p. vii.; Oldenberg's *Buddha, sein Leben, etc.* (Hoey's excellent translation, p. 197). Vide post, p. 198.

nappiness, and Buddha retires like Rama to a Brahman's hermitage in the forest.

BUDDHA AND RAMA

The sending back of the charioteer to the bereaved father's capital forms an episode in the story of both the young princes. As in the Ramayana, so in the legend of Buddha, it is to the jungles on the south of the Ganges, lying between the Aryan settlements and the aboriginal races, that the royal exile repairs. After a time of seclusion, the Pandavas, Rama, and Buddha alike emerge to achieve great conquests; the two former by force of arms, the last by the weapons of the Spirit. Up to this point the outline of the three stories has followed the same type; but henceforth it diverges. The Sanskrit epics depict the ideal Aryan man as prince, hermit, and hero. In the legend of Buddha, that ideal has developed into prince, hermit, and saint.

HIS LONELY YOUTH, FROM THE AGE OF 1—19

Gautama, afterwards named Buddha, 'The Enlightened,' and Siddhartha, 'He who has fulfilled his end,' was the only son of Suddhodana, King of Kapilavastu. This prince, the chief of the Sakya clan, ruled over an outlying Aryan settlement on the north-eastern border of the Middle Land, about a hundred miles to the north of Benares, and within sight of the snow-topped Himalayas. A Gautama Rajput of the noble Solar line, he wished to see his son grow up on the warlike model of his race. But the young prince shunned the sports of his playmates, and retired to solitary day-dreams in nooks of the palace garden. The king tried to win his son to a practical career by marrying him to a beautiful and talented girl; and the youthful Gautama unexpectedly proved his manliness by a victory over the flower of the young chiefs at a tournament. For a while he forgot his solemn speculations on the unseen, in the sweet realities of early married life.

HIS MARRIED LIFE, FROM THE AGE 19—29

But in his drives through the city he deeply reflected on the types of old age, disease, and death which met his eye; and he was powerfully impressed by the calm of a holy man, who seemed to have raised his soul above the changes and sorrows of this world. After ten years, his wife bore to him an only son; and Gautama, fearing lest this new tie should bind him too closely to the things of earth, retired about the age of thirty to a cave among the forest-clad spurs of the Vindhya. The story

of how he turned away from the door of his wife's lamplit chamber, denying himself even a parting caress of his new-born babe lest he should wake the sleeping mother, and galloped off into the darkness, is one of the many tender episodes in his life. After a gloomy night ride, he sent back his one companion, the faithful charioteer, with his horse and jewels to his father. Having cut off his long Rajput locks, and exchanged his princely raiment for the rags of a poor passer-by, he went on alone a homeless beggar. This abandonment of earthly pomp and power, and of loved wife and new-born son, is the Great Renunciation which forms a favourite theme of the Buddhist scriptures in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, and Chinese. It has furnished, during twenty centuries, the type of self-sacrifice which all Indian reformers must follow if they are to win the trust of the people.

BUDDHA'S FOREST LIFE, BETWEEN 30—36 OR 29—34

For a time Buddha studied under two Brahman recluses, near Rajagriha, in Patna District, learning from them that the path to divine knowledge and tranquillity of soul lies through the subjection of the flesh. He then buried himself deeper in the south-eastern jungles, which at that time covered Gaya District, and during six years wasted himself by austerities in company with five disciples. The temple of Buddha-Gaya³ marks the site of his long penance. But instead of earning peace of mind by fasting and self-torture, he reached a crisis of religious despair, during which the Buddhist scriptures affirm that the enemy of mankind, Mara, wrestled with him in bodily shape. Torn with doubts as to whether, after all his penance, he was not destined to perdition, the . . . ascetic, in a final paroxysm, fell senseless to the earth (588 B.C.).

HIS SPIRITUAL CRISIS

When he recovered, the mental struggle had passed. He felt that the path to salvation lay not in self-torture in a mountain cave, but in preaching a higher life to his fellowmen. His five disciples, shocked by his giving up penance, forsook him; and Buddha was left in solitude to face the question whether he alone was right and all the devout minds of his age were wrong.

³ *The magnificent volume by General Sir A. Cunningham, **Mahabodhi**; or, the Great Buddhist Temple at Buddha-Gaya (W. H. Allen & Co., 1892), and Buddha-Gaya, the Hermitage of Sakya Muni, by Rajendralala Mitra (Calcutta, 1878), are the two standard works on this venerable seat of Buddhism.*

The Buddhist scriptures depict him as sitting serene under a fig-tree, while the great Enemy and his crew whirled round him with flaming weapons. 'When the conflict began between the Saviour of the World and the Prince of Evil,' says one of their sacred texts,⁴ 'the earth shook, the sea uprose from her bed, the rivers turned back to the mountains, the hill-tops fell crashing to the plains, the sun was darkened, and a host of headless spirits rode upon the tempest.' From his temptation in the wilderness the ascetic emerged with his doubts for ever laid at rest, seeing his way clear, and henceforth to be known as Buddha, literally 'the Enlightened.'⁵

HIS STORY FOLLOWS THE OLD ARYAN TYPES

This was Buddha's second birth; and the *pipal* fig or Bo (Bodhi), literally 'The Tree of the Enlightenment,' under whose spreading branches its pangs were endured, has become the sacred tree of 500 millions of mankind. It is the *Ficus religiosa* of Western science. The idea of a second birth was familiar to the twice-born Aryan castes of ancient India, and was represented by their race-ceremony of investing the boy at the close of childhood with the sacred thread. In this, as in its other features, the story of Buddha adheres to ancient Aryan types, but gives to them a new spiritual significance. Having passed through the three prescribed stages of the Aryan saintly life,—as learner, householder, and forest recluse,—he now entered on its fourth stage as a religious mendicant. But he developed from the old Brahmanical model of the wandering ascetic, intent only on saving his own soul, the nobler type of the preacher, striving to bring deliverance to the souls of others.

PUBLIC TEACHING OF BUDDHA, FROM THE AGE OF 36—80

Two months after his temptation in the wilderness, Buddha commenced his public teaching in the Deer-Forest, on the outskirts of the great city of Benares. Unlike the Brahmans, he addressed himself, not to one or two disciples of the sacred caste, but to the mass of the people. His first converts were laymen, and among the earliest were women. After three

⁴ *The Madhurattha-Vilasini, Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, vol. vii. p. 812. Rhys Davids' Buddhism, p. 36.*

⁵ *According to the Ceylonese texts, Buddha 'obtained Buddhahood' in 588 B.C. This would make him thirty-four, not thirty-six years of age. Childers' Pali Dictionary, s.v. Buddhho.*

months of ministry, he had gathered around him sixty disciples, whom he sent forth to the neighbouring countries with these words: 'Go ye now and preach the most excellent Law.' The essence of his teaching was the deliverance of man from the sins and sorrows of life by self-renunciation and inward self-control. While the sixty disciples went on their missionary tour among the populace, Buddha converted certain celebrated hermits and fire-worshippers by an exposition of the philosophical side of his doctrine. With this new band he journeyed on to Rajagriha, where the local king and his subjects joined the faith, but where also he first experienced the fickleness of the multitude. Two-thirds of each year he spent as a wandering preacher. The remaining four months or the rainy season he abode at some fixed place, often near Rajagriha, teaching the people who flocked around his little dwelling in the bamboo grove. His five old disciples, who had forsaken him in the time of his sore temptation in the wilderness, penitently rejoined their Master. Princes, merchants, artificers, Brahmans and hermits, husbandmen and serfs, noble ladies and repentant courtesans, were yearly added to those who believed.

HE CONVERTS THE PEOPLE IN THE GANGETIC VALLEY

Buddha preached throughout a large part of Behar, Oudh, and the adjacent Districts in the North-Western Provinces. In after ages monasteries marked his halting-places; and the principal scenes of his life, such as Ajodhya, Buddha-Gaya, Sravasti, the modern Sahet Mahet, Rajagriha, etc., became the great places of pilgrimage for the Buddhist world. His visit to his aged father at Kapilavastu, whence he had gone forth as a brilliant young prince, and to which he returned as a wandering preacher, in dingy yellow robes, with shaven head, and the begging bowl in his hand, is a touching episode which appeals to the heart of universal mankind. The old king heard him with reverence. The son, whom Buddha had left as a newborn babe, was converted to the faith; and his beloved wife, from the threshold of whose chamber he had ridden away into the darkness, became one of the first of Buddhist nuns.

BUDDHA'S LAST WORDS, 543 B.C.

The Great Renunciation took place, according to the traditional dates of Indian Buddhism, in the twenty-ninth year of the life of the Master. After about seven years of self-preparation, his public ministry commenced in his thirty-sixth, and during forty-four years he preached to the people. In pro-

phesying his death, he said to his followers: 'Be earnest, be thoughtful, be holy. Keep steadfast watch over your own hearts. He who holds fast to the law and discipline, and faints not, he shall cross the ocean of life and make an end of sorrow.' He spent his last night in preaching, and in comforting a weeping disciple; his latest words, according to one account, were, 'Work out your salvation with diligence.' He died calmly, at the age of eighty,⁶ under the shadow of a fig-tree, at Kusinagara, the modern Kasia, in Gorakhpur District.

DIFFERENT VERSION OF THE LEGEND

Such is the story of Gautama Buddha's life derived from Indian sources, a version of the story which has the value of gospel truth to about 35 millions of devout believers, in British India and Burma, Ceylon, Siam, and Anam. These 35 millions represent the followers of the Southern Canon of Buddhism. But the two branches even of Indian or Southern Buddhism have each their own version, and the Buddha of the Burmese differs in important respects from the Buddha of the Ceylonese.⁷ Still wider is the divergence which the Northern or Tibetan Buddhists give to the legend of the life and to the teaching of their Master. The Southern texts dwell upon the early career of Buddha up to the time of his Enlightenment in his thirty-fourth or thirty-sixth year. The incidents of that period have a peculiar pathos, and appeal to the most sacred experiences of humanity in all

⁶ According to some accounts; according to others, at about seventy. But the chronology of Buddha's life is legendary.

⁷ The original Pali text of the Commentary of the *Fatakhās* is assigned to Ceylonese scribes, circ. 450 A.D. The first part of it was published by Fausboll in 1875 (Copenhagen); and Rhys Davids' translation, with valuable introduction and notes, appeared under the title of *Buddhist Birth Stories* in 1880 (Trubner, London). Childers' *Dictionary of the Pali Language* is a storehouse of original materials from Ceylonese sources, and has been used for verifying all statements in the present chapter. A compendious view of Southern Buddhism, ancient and modern, will be found in Spence Hardy's *Manual of Buddhism*, translated from Singalese MS. The Burmese branch of Southern Buddhism is well represented by Bisrop Bigandet's *Life or Legend of Gaudama* (third edition, 2 vols., Trubner, 1880), and by Alabaster's *The Wheel of the Law*, a translation or paraphrase of the Siamese *Pathama Sambodhiyan*. Rhys Davids' *Buddhism and his Hibbert Lectures* give an excellent summary of the faith. The French works, the original authorities in Europe, have (in some respects) been superseded by Oldenberg's *Buddha, sein Leben*, etc.

ages. They form the favourite episodes of European works on Buddhism. But such works are apt to pay perhaps too little attention to the fact that the first thirty-four years of Buddha's life were only a self-preparation for a social and religious propaganda prolonged to an extreme old age.

LATER YEARS OF BUDDHA

The forty-six years of intense personal labour, during which Buddha traversed wide regions, converted nations, withstood kings, eluded assassins, and sifted out false disciples, receive more attention in the Northern legends. These legends have lately been compiled from the Tibetan texts into a work which furnishes a new and most interesting view of Buddha's life.⁸ The best authority on the Southern Buddhism of Burma states that the history of the Master 'offers an almost complete blank as to what regards his doings and preachings during a period of nearly twenty-three years.'⁹

NORTHERN TEXTS—THE INDIAN EPIC TYPE

The texts of the Northern Buddhists fill up this blank. Southern Buddhism modelled its biographies of the Master upon the Indian epic type. Such biographies, as I have already mentioned, reproduce the three stages in the life of an Aryan hero, depicted by the Mahabharata and Ramayana; except that the three ideal stages have developed from those of prince, hermit, and warrior, to those of prince, hermit, and saint.

THE TIBETAN TYPE

In the Northern conditions of China and Tibet, Buddha appears by no means as an Aryan hero. He is rather the representative of a race with birth-customs and death-rites of its own—of a race dwelling amid the epic Aryan kingdoms of India, but with traces of a separate identity in the past. He is a Sakya (perhaps a Scythic) prince, whose clan had settled

⁸ *The Life of the Buddha, and the Early History of his Order, derived from Tibetan Works in the Bkash-hgyur and Bstan-hgyur, translated by W. Woodville Rockhill, Second Secretary to the United States Legation in China (Trubner & Co., London, 1884). Beal's Si-yu-ki, or Buddhist Records of the Western World, translated from the Chinese of Hiuen Tsiang, throws curious side-lights upon the traditions which the Chinese Pilgrim brought with him or heard in India regarding the local incidents of Buddha's life.*

⁹ *From the fifty-sixth to the seventy-ninth year of his life. Bigandet's Life or Legend of Gaudama, vol. i. p. 260, and footnote.*

to the south of the Himalayas, and preserved relics of a non-Aryan type. From this point of view the function of Buddhism in incorporating the various races of India, Aryan and non-Aryan, emerges into a strong light. Buddhism did for ancient India somewhat the same service which we shall find Hinduism doing for mediaeval and modern India. It created a religious community, in which all tribes and castes might find entrance. In the case of Buddhism, the bond of union was a spiritual one, and the admission to the common body was complete. In the case of Hinduism, we shall see that the bond of union is one of ritual and the acceptance of priestly guidance, which has but partially succeeded in creating a common religion for the Indian peoples, and which has stereotyped the wide diversities of the Indian races in the lesser, although still strong, distinctions of the Indian castes.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL TYPE OF THE SOUTHERN BUDDHA

The artificial character which the Southern legends give to the life of Buddha, arose from their tendency to assimilate him to epic Indian types. It was intensified by the equally Indian tendency to convert actual facts into philosophical abstractions. Gautama or Sakya-Muni became only a link in a long series of just men made perfect. According to the Ceylonese texts, a Buddha is a human being who has obtained perfect self-control and infinite knowledge. Having attained Enlightenment himself, he spends the rest of his life in preaching the truth to others. At his death he is re-absorbed into the Divine Essence, and his religion flourishes for a certain period until it dies out, and a new Buddha appears to preach anew the lost truth. The attainment of Buddhahood is the final result of virtue and self-sacrifice during many previous lives. Innumerable Buddhas have been born in this world; 24 of whom are separately named. Gautama was only the latest Buddha, and, according to the Ceylonese scriptures, his doctrine is destined to give place to the Metteya Buddha, or Buddha of Kindness, who is next to come.¹⁰

THE NORTHERN CONCRETE TYPE

The Buddha of the Northern legends is a reformer of a more concrete type. The Tibetan texts give prominence to the political aspects of his Reformation. Incidentally, indeed, they amplify several of the touching episodes familiar to Southern Buddhism. The 'great Fear' which impelled the young prince

¹⁰ Childers' Pali Dictionary, p. 96. Sanskrit, Maitraya.

forth from his palace into the darkness to seek a higher life; the dirt and stones thrown at the wanderer by the village girls; the parables of the Mango-tree, the Devout Slave, and many others; the rich young man who left all for the faith and was *not* exceeding sorry; and Buddha's own retirement from Benares to avoid the gifts and honours which were being thrust upon him,—receive fresh illustration from the Tibetan texts.¹¹

POLITICAL LIFE OF BUDDHA

But it is from the political and historical aspects that the Tibetan life of Buddha possesses its special value. We learn from them that Buddhism was in its origin only one of many conflicting sects; indeed, that alike to its royal patrons and opponents it appeared at first as a new religious Order rather than in the light of a new faith.¹² The early struggles of Buddhism were neither with the old Aryan gods, nor with the Brahmans as a caste; but with rival orders of philosophers or ascetics, and with schismatics among its own followers. In the Tibetan scriptures, the gods of the Veda, Brahma, Indra, and the Shining Ones, appear in friendly relations with Buddha, and attend upon him in more than one crisis of his life. The Brahmans were no longer a caste altogether devoted to a spiritual life. The Tibetan texts disclose them as following partly religious, partly secular avocations, and as among 'the great nobles' of an Indian kingdom. The Brahman attitude to the new faith was by no means one of confederate hostility. The main body of Brahmans continued non-Buddhistic, and taught their doctrines at royal courts. But many conspicuous converts were drawn from among them, and the Tibetan texts almost uniformly speak of Brahmans with respect.

BUDDHA'S REAL OPPONENTS

The opponents of the Buddha, according to the Tibetan sacred books, were rival sects whom he found in possession of the field, and the false brethren who arose among his own disciples. The older hostile sects were confuted, sometimes by fair discussion, but more often by miracles or superior magical feats. Indeed, transformations and wonders seem for a time to have furnished the most potent arguments of the new faith. But eventually Buddha forbade resort to such testimonies, and magic became to the orthodox Buddhist an unholy art. In his

¹¹ *The materials for the following paragraphs are derived mainly from Rockhill's work (1884), already cited.*

¹² *Rockhill, op. cit. Also Rhys Davids' Hibbert Lectures, p. 156.*

later years, Buddha more than once insists that his doctrine is essentially one to be understood by the people; that he was keeping back no secret for an initiated few; and that he was the preacher of a strictly popular religion without any esotéric side.

WHOLESALE SAKYA CONVERSION

It was from among his own disciples that his bitterest enemies came. The Sakya race of Kapilavastu had adopted his teaching as a nation, without much pretence of individual conversion. Buddha's modest beginnings, first with the five followers, then with the sixty, then with the thousand, now took a national development. In the fervour of the new movement, the Sakyas proclaimed that one man out of every family must enter the Buddhist mendicant order; and it was from this ordinance, to which Buddha was compelled to give a reluctant assent, that the troubles of his later life arose. I beg it to be borne in mind that the picture of early Buddhism in this and the following paragraphs is derived from the Tibetan texts or Northern Canon.

SCHISM OF DEVADATTA

The discontent among the forced disciples found a leader in Buddha's own cousin, Devadatta, who aspired by superior asceticism to the headship. For the schism which he created, Devadatta won the support of the heir-apparent of Magadha. A struggle, partly religious, partly political, ensued. Devadatta was for a time triumphant. He abetted the murder of the Magadha king, the father of his ally; forced the aged Buddha into retirement; and plundered and oppressed the people. The miraculous deliverances of 'the Blessed One' from the catapult, and from the wild elephant let loose against him in a narrow street, mark, however, the turning-point in the fortunes of the schism. Devadatta was confuted by magical arts, and his royal patron was converted to the true faith. The traitor disciple having thus failed to usurp the spiritual leadership of the Sakyas, attempted to seduce the wife whom Buddha had left in solitude. The apostate hoped with her aid to stand forth as the king or temporal leader of the Sakya race. His contemptuous rejection by the loyal Sakya princess, his acts of despairing cruelty, and his fall into hell with a lie in his mouth, fitly close the career of the first great schismatic.

BUDDHA, THE SAKYA PRINCE

Throughout the Tibetan texts, Buddha figures as a typical Sakya; first as a young Kshatriya or prince of the royal line,

and then as a saintly personage who turns back an army sent against his nation by the force of his piety alone. Such spiritual weapons, however, proved a feeble defence in early India. Eventually, the Sakya capital was attacked by overwhelming numbers. For a time the enemy were repulsed without the Buddhists incurring the sin of taking life. But their firm adherence to their Master's commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill,' in the end decided the fate of the Sakya city. Some escaped into exile, and founded settlements in distant parts as far as the other side of the Punjab frontier. The fall of the city ended in the slaughter of 77,000 Sakyas, and in the dispersion of the remnants of the race. The story of the five hundred Sakya youths and five hundred Sakya maidens who were carried into captivity is a pathetic one. The five hundred youths were massacred in cold blood; and the faithful Sakya maidens, having refused to enter the harem of their conqueror, were exposed to the populace with their hands and feet chopped off. How Buddha came to them in their misery, dressed their wounds, and comforted them with the hope of a better life 'so that they died in the faith,' is affectingly told.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE TIBETAN LEGEND

The foregoing narrative touches only on one or two aspects of the Tibetan texts. It suffices to show the characteristic divergences between the Northern and the Southern legend. In the Northern, there is a gradually developed contrast between two main figures, the traitor Devadatta and his brother Ananda, the Beloved Disciple. The last year of Buddha's ministry is dwelt on by both. But its full significance and its most tender episodes are treated with special unction in the Northern version of the Book of the Great Decease. The Fo-Wei-kian-king,¹³ or 'Dying Instruction of Buddha,' translated into Chinese between 397 and 415 A.D. from a still earlier Sanskrit text, gives to the last scene a peculiar beauty. 'It was now in the middle of the night,' it says, 'perfectly quiet and still; for the sake of his disciples, he delivered a summary of the law.'

BUDDHA'S DYING DISCOURSE

After laying down the rules of a good life, he revealed the inner doctrines of his faith. From these a few sentences may

¹³ *Translated in Appendix to the Catalogue of the Manuscripts presented by the Japanese Government to the Secretary of State for India, and now in the India Office.—Concluding letter of Beal to Dr. Rost, dated 1st September 1874, sec. 5.*

be taken. 'The heart is lord of the senses: govern, therefore, your heart; watch well the heart.' 'Think of the fire that shall consume the world, and early seek deliverance from it.' 'Lament not my going away, nor feel regret. For if I remained in the world, then what would become of the church? It must perish without fulfilling its end. From henceforth all my disciples, practising their various duties, shall prove that my true Body, the Body of the Law (Dharmakaya), is everlasting and imperishable. The world is fast bound in fetters; I now give it deliverance, as a physician who brings heavenly medicine. Keep your mind on my teaching; all other things change, this changes not. No more shall I speak to you. I desire to depart. I desire the eternal rest (Nirvana). This is my last exhortation.'

LAW OF KARMA

The secret of Buddha's success was that he brought spiritual deliverance to the people. He preached that salvation was equally open to all men, and that it must be earned, not by propitiating imaginary deities, but by our own conduct. His doctrines thus cut away the religious basis of caste, impaired the efficiency of the sacrificial ritual, and assailed the supremacy of the Bra'hmans as the mediators between God and man. Buddha taught that sin, sorrow, and deliverance, the state of a man in this life, in all previous and in all future lives, are the inevitable results of his own acts (Karma). He thus applied the inexorable law of cause and effect to the soul. What a man sows, he must reap.

As no evil remains without punishment, and no good deed without reward, it follows that neither priest nor God can prevent each act bearing its own consequences. Misery or happiness in this life is the unavoidable result of our conduct in a past life; and our actions here will determine our happiness or misery in the life to come. When any creature dies, he is born again in some higher or lower state of existence, according to his merit or demerit. His merit or demerit, that is, his character, consists of the sum-total of his actions in all previous lives.

By this great law of Karma, Buddha explained the inequalities and apparent injustice of man's estate in this world as the consequence of acts in the past; while Christianity compensates those inequalities by rewards in the future. A system in which our whole well-being, past, present, and to come, depends on ourselves, theoretically leaves little room for the interference,

or even existence, of a personal God.¹⁴ But the atheism of Buddha was a philosophical tenet, which, so far from weakening the sanctions of right and wrong, gave them new strength from the doctrine of *Karma*, or the Metempsychosis of Character.

THE LIBERATION OF THE SOUL—"NIRVANA"

To free ourselves from the thralldom of desire and from the fetters of selfishness, was to attain to the state of the perfect disciple, *Arahat*, in this life, and to the everlasting rest after death, *Nirvana*. Some Buddhists explain *Nirvana* as absolute annihilation, when the soul is blown out like the flame of a lamp. Others hold that it is merely the extinction of the sins, sorrows, and selfishness of individual life. The fact is, that the doctrine underwent processes of change and development, like all theological dogmas. 'But the earliest idea of *Nirvana*,' says one of the greatest authorities on Chinese Buddhism, 'seems to have included in it no more than the enjoyment of a state of rest consequent on the extinction of all causes of sorrow.'¹⁵ The great practical aim of Buddha's teaching was to subdue the lusts of the flesh and the cravings of self; and *Nirvana* has been taken to mean the extinction of the sinful grasping condition of heart which, by the inevitable law of *Karma*, would involve the penalty of renewed individual existence. As the Buddhist strove to reach a state of quietism or holy meditation in this world, namely, the state of the perfect disciple or *Arahat*; so he looked forward to an eternal calm in a world to come, *Nirvana*.

MORAL CODE—THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Buddha taught that this end could only be attained by the practice of virtue. He laid down eight precepts of morality, with two more for the religious orders making ten commandments (*dasa-sila*) in all. He arranged the besetting faults of mankind into ten sins, and set forth the special duties applicable to each condition of life; to parents and children, to pupils and

¹⁴ 'Buddhism,' says Beal, *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 153, 'declares itself ignorant of any mode of personal existence compatible with the idea of spiritual perfection, and so far it is ignorant of God.'

¹⁵ Beal, *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*, p. 157, ed. 1871; and the *Buddhist Tripitaka*, App., Letter to Dr. Rost, sec. 6. Max Muller deals with the word from the etymological and Sanskrit side in his *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. pp. 279, 290, ed. 1867. But see, specially, Childers' *Pali Dictionary*, s.v. *Nilbanam*, pp. 265-274.

teachers, to husbands and wives, to masters and servants, to laymen and the religious orders. In place of the Bra'hman rites and sacrifices, Buddha prescribed a code of practical morality as the means of salvation. The four essential features of that code were—reverence to spiritual teachers and parents, control over self, kindness to other men, and reverence for the life of all sentient creatures.

MISSIONARY ASPECTS OF BUDDHISM

He urged on his disciples that they must not only follow the true path themselves, but that they should preach it to all mankind. Buddhism has from the first been a missionary religion. One of the earliest acts of Buddha's public ministry was to send forth the Sixty ; and he carefully formulated the four chief means of conversion. These were, companionship with the good, listening to the law, reflection upon the truths heard, and the practice of virtue. He also instituted a religious Order, one of whose special duties it was to go forth and preach to the nations. While, therefore, the Bra'hmans kept their ritual for the twice-born Aryan castes, Buddhism addressed itself not only to those castes and to the lower mass of the people, but to all the non-Aryan races throughout India, and eventually to almost the whole Asiatic world. Buddhism thus supplied, as I must repeat, a bond of union between the widely diverse elements of the Indian population. It created a true Church universal for India, in which differences of race and of colour were merged in a common religious practice and belief. Two features of the Buddhist Order were its fortnightly meetings and public confession, or 'Disburdenment' of sins.

THE FIRST COUNCIL, 543 B.C. (?)

On the death of Buddha, according to the traditional Indian chronology in 543 B.C., five hundred of his disciples met in a vast cave near Ra'ja'griha to gather together his sayings. This was the First Council. They chanted the lessons of their master in three great divisions—the words of Buddha to his disciples;¹⁶ his code of discipline;¹⁷ and his system of doctrine.¹⁸ These became the Three Collections¹⁹ of Buddha's teaching; and the word for a Buddhist Council²⁰ means literally 'a singing together.'

¹⁶ *Sutras.*

¹⁷ *Vinaya.*

¹⁸ *Abhidharma.*

¹⁹ *Pitakas*, lit. 'baskets'; afterwards the five *Nikayas*.

²⁰ *Sangiti* in Pali.

SECOND BUDDHIST COUNCIL, 443 B.C. (?)

A century afterwards, a Second Council, of seven hundred, was held at Vaisali, to settle disputes between the more and the less strict followers of Buddhism. It condemned a system of ten 'Indulgences' which had grown up ; but it led to the separation of the Buddhists into two hostile parties, who afterwards split into eighteen sects.

THIRD BUDDHIST COUNCIL, 244 B.C. (?)

During the next two hundred years Buddhism spread over Northern India, perhaps receiving a new impulse from the Greek kingdoms in the Punjab. About 257 B.C., Asoka, the King of Magadha or Behar, became a zealous convert to the faith.²¹ Asoka was grandson of the Chandra Gupta whom we shall meet as an adventurer in Alexander's camp, and afterwards as an ally of Seleukos. Asoka is said to have supported 64,000

²¹ Much learning has been expended upon the age of Asoka, and various dates have been assigned to its principal events. But, indeed, all Buddhist dates are open questions, according to the system of chronology (or 'working-back') adopted. The middle of the 3rd century B.C. may be taken as the era of Asoka. The following dates from General Cunningham's *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, p. vii. (1877), exhibit the results of one important line of research on this subject :

B.C. 264	ASOKA, Struggle with brothers, 4 years.
260	Comes to the throne.
257	Conversion to Buddhism.
256	Treaty with Antiochus.
255	Mahindo ordained.
251	Earliest date of rock edicts.
249	Second date of rock edicts.
248	Arsakes rebels in Parthia.
246	Diodotus rebels in Bactria.
244	Third Buddhist Council under Mogaliputra.
243	Mahindo goes to Ceylon.
242	Barabar cave inscriptions.
234	Pillar edicts issued.
231	Queen Asandhimitta dies.
228	Second Queen married.
226	Her attempt to destroy the Bodhi tree.
225	Asoka becomes an ascetic.
224	Issues Rupnath and Sasseram edicts.
223	Dies.
215	DASARATHA'S cave inscriptions, Nagarjuni.

Buddhist priests ; he founded many religious houses, and his kingdom is called the Land of the Monasteries (Vihara or Behar) to this day.

THE WORK OF ASOKA

Asoka did for Buddhism what Constantine afterwards effected for Christianity ; he organized it on the basis of a State religion. This he accomplished by five means—by a Council to settle the faith, by edicts promulgating its principles, by a State Department to watch over its purity, by missionaries to spread its doctrines, and by an authoritative revision or canon of the Buddhist scriptures.

(1) HIS GREAT COUNCIL

In 244 B.C., Asoka convened at Patna the Third Buddhist Council, of one thousand elders. Evil men, taking on them the yellow robe of the Order, had given forth their own opinions as the teaching of Buddha. Such heresies were now corrected ; and the Buddhism of Southern Asia practically dates from Asoka's Council.

(2) HIS EDICTS

In a number of edicts, before and after the synod, he published throughout India the cardinal principles of the faith. Such edicts are still found graven deep upon pillars, caves, and rocks, from the Yusafzai valley beyond Pesha'war on the north-western frontier, through the heart of Hindusta'n and the Central Provinces, to Ka'thia'wa'r on the west, and Orissa on the east, coast of India. Tradition states that Asoka set up 84,000 memorial columns or topes. The Chinese Pilgrims came upon them in the inner Hima'layas. Forty-two inscriptions still surviving show how widely these royal sermons were spread over India itself.²²

²² Major-General Cunningham, Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India, enumerates 14 rock inscriptions, 17 cave inscriptions, and 11 inscribed pillars. The rock inscriptions are at—(1) Shahbazgarhi in the Yusafzai country, 40 miles east-north-east of Peshawar ; (2) Kalsi on the west bank of the Jumna ; (3) Girnar in Kathiawar, 40 miles north of Somnath ; (4 to 7) Dhauili in Cuttack, midway between Cuttack and Puri, and Jaugada in Ganjam District, 18 miles north-north-west of Berhampur,—two inscriptions at each, virtually identical ; (8) Sasseram, at the north-east end of the Kaimur range, 70 miles south-east of Benares ; (9) Rupnath, a famous place of pilgrimage, 35 miles north of Jabalpur ; (10 and 11) Bairat, 41 miles

(3) HIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

In the year of the Council, Asoka founded a State Department to watch over the purity, and to direct the spread, of the faith. A Minister of Justice and Religion (Dharma Maha'ma'tra) directed its operations ; and, as one of its first duties was to proselytize, this Minister was charged with the welfare of the aborigines among whom his missionaries were sent. Asoka did not think it enough to convert the inferior races, without looking after their material interests. Wells were to be dug, and trees planted, along the roads ; a system of medical aid for man and beast was established throughout his kingdom and the conquered Provinces, as far as Ceylon.²³ Officers were appointed to watch over domestic life and public morality,²⁴ and to promote instruction among the women as well as the youth.

(4) MISSIONARY EFFORTS

Asoka recognised proselytism by peaceful means as a State duty. The Rock Inscriptions record how he sent forth missionaries 'to the utmost limits of the barbarian countries,' to 'intermingle

north of Jaipur ; (12) the Khandgiri Hill, near Dhauli in Cuttack ; (13) Deotek, 50 miles south-east of Nagpur ; (14) Mansera, north-west of Rawal Pindi, inscribed in the Bactrian character. The cave inscriptions, 17 in number, are found at—(1, 2, 3) Barabar, and (4, 5, 6) Nagarjuni Hills, both places 15 miles north of Gaya ; (7 to 15) Khandgiri Hill in Cuttack, and (16 and 17) Ramgarh in Sarguja. The eleven inscribed pillars are—(1) the Delhi-Siwalik, at Delhi ; (2) the Delhi-Meerut, at Delhi ; (3) the Allahabad ; (4) the Lauriya-Araraj, at Lauriya, 77 miles north of Patna ; (5) the Lauriya-Navandgarh, at another Lauriya, 15 miles north-north-west of Bettia ; (6 and 7) two additional edicts on the Delhi-Siwalik, not found on any other pillar ; (8 and 9) two short additional edicts on the Allahabad pillar, peculiar to itself ; (10) a short mutilated record on a fragment of a pillar at Sanchi, near Bhilsa ; (11) at Rampura in the Tarai, north-east of the second Lauriya, near Bettia. The last-named pillar and the rock inscription at Mansera (No. 14) are recent discoveries since the first edition of this work was published. The Mansera rock inscription is interesting as being the second in the Bactrian character, and for its recording twelve Edicts complete.

²³ *Rock Inscriptions, Edict ii., General Cunningham's Corpus Inscriptionum, p. 118.*

²⁴ *Rock Inscriptions, Edict vi., etc., Corpus Inscriptionum, p. 120. These Inspectors of Morals are supposed to correspond to the Sixth Caste of Megasthenes, the "Epischopoi" of Arrian.*

among all unbelievers,' for the spread of religion. They shall mix equally with soldiers, Bra'hmans, and beggars, with the dreaded and the despised, both within the kingdom 'and in foreign countries, teaching better things.'²⁵ Conversion is to be effected by persuasion, not by the sword. Buddhism was at once the most intensely missionary religion in the world, and the most tolerant. This character of a proselytizing faith, which wins its victories by peaceful means, so strongly impressed upon it by Asoka, has remained a prominent feature of Buddhism to the present day. Asoka, however, not only took measures to spread the religion, he also endeavoured to secure its orthodoxy.

(5) REFORMED CANON OF BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES

He collected the body of doctrine into an authoritative version, in the Magadhi' language or dialect of his central kingdom in Behar ; a version which for two thousand years has formed the canon (*pitakas*) of the Southern Buddhists. In this way, the Magadhi' dialect became the Pa'li or sacred language of the Ceylonese.

EDICTS OF ASOKA

Robert Cust thus summarizes Asoka's Fourteen Edicts ; but it should be noted that such a summary only endeavours to present a bird's-eye view of many local, and not always concurrent, inscriptions :

1. Prohibition of the slaughter of animals for food or sacrifice.
2. Provision of a system of medical aid for men and animals, and of plantations and wells on the roadside.
3. Order for a quinquennial humiliation and republication of the great moral precepts of the Buddhist faith.
4. Comparison of the former state of things, and the happy existing state under the king.
5. Appointment of missionaries to go into various countries, which are enumerated, to convert the people and foreigners.
6. Appointment of informers (or inspectors) and guardians of morality.
7. Expression of a desire that there may be uniformity of religion and equality of rank.
8. Contrast of the carnal pleasures of previous rulers with the pious enjoyments of the present king.
9. Inculcation of the true happiness to be found in virtue,

²⁵ *Rock Inscriptions, Edict v., etc., Corpus Inscriptionum, p. 120.*

through which alone the blessings of heaven can be propitiated.

10. Contrast of the vain and transitory glory of this world with the reward for which the king strives and looks beyond.
11. Inculcation of the doctrine that the imparting of *dharma* or teaching of virtue to others is the greatest of charitable gifts.
12. Address to all unbelievers.
13. (Imperfect) ; the meaning conjectural.
14. Summing up of the whole.

FOURTH COUNCIL, KANISHKA, (40 A.D. ?)

The fourth and last of the great Buddhist Councils was held under King Kanishka, according to one tradition four centuries after Buddha's death. The date of Kanishka is still uncertain ; but, from the evidence of coins and inscriptions, his reign has been fixed in the 1st century after Christ, or, say, 40 A.D.²⁶ Kanishka, the most famous of the Saka conquerors, ruled over North-Western India, and the adjoining countries. His authority had its nucleus in Kashmi'r, but it extended to both sides of the Hima'layas, from Yarkand and Khokand to Agra and Sind.

'GREATER VEHICLE' AND 'LESSER VEHICLE'

Kanishka's Council of five hundred drew up three commentaries on the Buddhist faith. These commentaries supplied in part materials for the Tibetan or Northern Canon, completed at subsequent periods. The Northern Canon, or, as the Chinese proudly call it, the 'Greater Vehicle of the Law,' includes many later corruptions or developments of the Buddhism which was originally embodied by Asoka in the 'Lesser Vehicle,' or Canon of the Southern Buddhists (244 B.C.). The Buddhist Canon of China, a branch of the 'Greater Vehicle,' was gradually arranged between 67 and 1285 A.D. It includes 1440 distinct works, comprising 5586 books. The ultimate divergence between the Canons is great. They differ not only, as we have seen, in regard to the legend of Buddha's life, but also as to his teaching.

²⁶ *The efforts to fix the date of Kanishka are little more than records of conflicting authorities. See James Fergusson's paper in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Article ix., April 1880 ; and E. Thomas' comprehensive disquisition on the Sah and Gupta coins, pp. 18—79 of the Report of the Archaeological Survey of Western India for 1874-75, 4to, London, 1876.*

With respect to doctrine, one example will suffice. According to the Northern or 'Greater Vehicle,' Buddhist monks who transgress wilfully after ordination may yet recover themselves ; while to such castaways the Southern or 'Lesser Vehicle' allowed no room for repentance.²⁷

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CANONS

The original of the Northern Canon was written in the Sanskrit language, perhaps because the Kashmir and Northern priests, who formed Kanishka's Council, belonged to isolated Himalayan settlements which had been little influenced by the growth of the Indian vernacular dialects. In one of these dialects, the Magadhi of Behar, the Southern Canon had been compiled by Asoka and expanded by commentators. Indeed, the Buddhist compilations appear to have given the first literary impulse to the Pra'krits or spoken Aryan dialects in India ; as represented by the Páli or Magadhi of the Ceylonese Buddhist scriptures, and the Maha'ra'shtri' of the ancient sacred books of the Jains. The Northern priests, who compiled Kanishka's Canon, preferred the 'perfected' Sanskrit, which had become by that time the accepted literary vehicle of the learned throughout India, to the Pra'krit or 'natural' dialects of the Gangetic valley. Kanishka and his Kashmir Council (40 A.D. ?) became to the Northern or Tibeto-Chinese Buddhists, what Asoka and his Patna' Council (244 B.C.) had been to the Buddhists of Ceylon and the South.

BUDDHISM AS A NATIONAL RELIGION OF INDIA

Buddhism was thus organized as a State religion by the Councils of Asoka and Kanishka. It started from Brahmanical doctrines ; but from those doctrines, not as taught in hermitages to clusters of Brahman disciples, but as vitalized by a preacher of rare power in the cities of Northern India. Buddha did not abolish caste. On the contrary, reverence to Brahmans and to the spiritual guide ranked among the four great sets of duties, together with obedience to parents, control over self, and acts of kindness to all men and animals. He introduced, however, new classification of mankind, on the spiritual basis of Believers and Unbelievers.

ITS RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND PRACTICAL MORALITY

The Believers took rank in the Buddhist community,—at first, according to their age and merit ; in later times, as laity²⁸

²⁷ *Beal, Catena, p. 253.*

²⁸ *Upasaka.*

and clergy²⁹ (i.e. the religious orders). Buddhism carried transmigration to its utmost spiritual use, and proclaimed our own actions to be the sole ruling influence on our past, present, and future states. It was thus led into the denial of any external being or God who could interfere with the immutable law of cause and effect as applied to the soul. But, on the other hand, it linked together mankind as parts of one universal whole, and denounced the isolated self-seeking of the human heart as 'the heresy of individuality.'³⁰ Its mission was to make men more moral, kinder to others, and happier themselves; not to propitiate imaginary deities. It accordingly founded its teaching on man's duty to his neighbour, instead of on his obligations to God; and constructed its ritual on the basis of relic-worship or the commemoration of good men, instead of on sacrifice. Its sacred buildings were not temples to the gods, but monasteries (*viharas*) for the religious orders, with their bells and rosaries; or memorial shrines,³¹ reared over a tooth or bone of the founder of the faith.

SPREAD OF BUDDHISM IN THE SOUTH, CEYLON, ETC.,
244 B.C. TO 638 A.D.

The missionary impulse given by Asoka quickly bore fruit. In the year after his great Council at Patna (244 B.C.), his son Mahindo³² carried Asoka's version of the Buddhist scriptures in the Magadhi language to Ceylon. He took with him a band of fellow-missionaries; and soon afterwards, his sister, the princess Sanghamitta, who had entered the Order, followed with a company of nuns. It was not, however, till six hundred years later (410—432 A.D.) that the Ceylonese Canon was written out in Pali, the sacred Magadhi language of the Southern Buddhists. About the same time, missionaries from Ceylon finally established the faith in Burma (450 A.D.). The Burmese themselves assert that two Buddhist preachers landed in Pegu as early as 207 B.C. Indeed, some Burmese date the arrival of Buddhist missionaries just after the Patna Council, 244 B.C., and point out the ruined city of Tha-tun, between the Sitaung (Tsit-taung) and Salwin estuaries, as the scene of their pious labours. Siam was converted to Buddhism in 638 A.D.; Java received its missionaries

²⁹ *Sramana, bhikshu* (monk or religious mendicant), *bhikshuni* (nun).

³⁰ *Sakayaditthi*.

³¹ *Stupa, topes*, literally 'heaps or tumuli'; *dagobas* or *dhatugopas*, 'relic-preservers'; *chaityas*.

³² Sanskrit, *Mahendra*.

direct from India between the 5th and the 7th century, and spread the faith to Bali and Sumatra.³³

IN THE NORTH, CHINA, ETC., 2ND CENTURY B.C. TO 552 A.D.

While Southern Buddhism was thus wafted across the ocean, another stream of missionaries had found their way by Central Asia into China. Their first arrival in the Chinese empire is said to date from the 2nd century B.C., although it was not till 65 A.D. that Buddhism there became the established religion. The Graeco-Bactrian kingdoms in the Punjab, and beyond it, afforded a favourable soil for the faith. The Scythian dynasties who succeeded the Graeco-Bactrians accepted Buddhism; and the earliest remains which recent discovery has unearthed in Afghanistan are Buddhist. Kanishka's Council, soon after the commencement of the Christian era, gave the great impetus to the faith beyond the Himalayas. Tibet, South Central Asia, and China, lay along the regular missionary routes of Northern Buddhism; the Kirghiz are said to have carried the religion as far west as the Caspian; on the east, Buddhism was introduced into the Korea in 372 A.D., and thence into Japan in 552.

BUDDHIST INFLUENCE ON CHRISTIANITY

Buddhist doctrines are believed to have deeply affected religious thought in Alexandria and Palestine. The question is yet undecided as to how far the Buddhist ideal of the holy life, with its monks, nuns, relic-worship, bells, and rosaries, influenced Christian monachism; and to what extent Buddhist philosophy aided the development of the Gnostic heresies, particularly those of Basilides and Manes, which rent the early Church. It is certain that the analogies are striking, and have been pointed out alike by Jesuit missionaries in Asia, and by oriental scholars in Europe.³⁴ The form of abjuration for those who renounced

³³ All these dates are uncertain. They are founded on the Singalese chronology, but the orthodox in the respective countries place their national conversion at remoter periods. Occasionally, however, the dates can be tested from external sources. Thus we know from the Chinese traveller Fa-Hian, that up to about 414 A.D. Java was still unconverted. Fa-Hian says, 'Heretics and Brahmans were numerous there, and the law of Buddha is in nowise entertained.' The Burmese chroniclers go back to a time when the duration of human life was ninety millions of years; and when a single dynasty ruled for a period represented by a unit followed by 140 cyphers. See *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Article SANDOWAY.

³⁴ For the latter aspect of the question, see Weber, founding on Lassen, Renan, and Beal, *Hist. Ind. Lit.* p. 309, note 363, ed. 1878.

the Gnostic doctrines of Manes, expressly mentions *Bodda* and the *Skuthianos* (Buddha and the Scythian or Sakya)—seemingly, says Weber, a separation of Buddha the Sakya into two. At this moment, the Chinese in San Francisco assist their devotions by pictures of the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, imported on thin paper from Canton, which the Irish Roman Catholics identify as the Virgin Mary with the Infant in her arms, an aureole round her head, an adoring figure at her feet, and the Spirit hovering in the form of a bird.³⁵

But it is right to point out that the early Nestorian Christians in China may have been the source of some of these resemblances. The liturgy of the Goddess of Mercy, Kwanyin, in which the analogies to the Eastern Christian office are most strongly marked, has been traced with certainty only as far back as 1412 A.D. in the Chinese Canon.³⁶ Max Muller endeavoured to show that Buddha himself is the original of Saint Josaphat, who has a day assigned to him by both the Greek and Roman churches.³⁷

BUDDHA AS A CHRISTIAN SAINT : LEGEND OF SAINTS BARLAAM AND JOSAPHAT

Muller's Essay³⁸ led me to an examination of the whole evidence bearing on this subject.³⁹ The results may be thus summarized. The Roman Martyrology at the end of the saints for the 27th November, states: 'Apud Indos Persis finitimos sanctorum Barlaam et Josaphat (commemoratio), quorum actus

³⁵ See also post. Polemical writers, Christian and Chinese, have with equal injustice accused Buddhism and Christianity of consciously plagiarizing each other's rites. Thus Kuang-Hsien, the distinguished member of the Astronomical Board, who brought about the Chinese persecution of the Christians from 1665 to 1671, writes of them: 'They pilfer this talk about heaven and hell from the refuse of Buddhism, and then turn round and revile Buddhism.'—*The Death-blow to the Corrupt Doctrines of T'ien-chu* (i.e. Christianity), p. 46 (Shanghai, 1870). See also the remarks of Jao-chow—'The man most distressed in heart'—in the same collection.

³⁶ For an excellent account from the Chinese texts of the worship and liturgy of Kwan-yin, 'the Saviour,' or in her female form as the Goddess of Mercy, see Beal's *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, 383—397 (Trubner, 1871).

³⁷ *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. iv. pp. 177—189, ed. 1875.

³⁸ *Contemporary Review*, July 1870.

³⁹ For a list of the authorities, and an investigation of them from

mirandos Joannes Damascenus conscripsit.' *Among the Indians who border on Persia, Saints Barlaam and Josaphat, whose wonderful works have been written of by St. John of Damascus.* The story of these two saints is that of a young Indian prince, Josaphat, who is converted by a hermit, Barlaam. Josaphat undergoes the same awakening as Buddha from the pleasures of this world. His royal father had taken similar precautions to prevent the youth from becoming acquainted with the sorrows of life. But Josaphat, like Buddha, is struck by successive spectacles of disease, old age, and death; and abandons his princely state for that of a Christian devotee. He converts to the faith his father, his subjects, and even the magician employed to seduce him. For this magician, by name Theudas, the Buddhist schismatic Devadatta is supposed to have supplied the original; while the name of Josaphat is itself identified by philologists with that of Boddhisattwa, the complete appellation of Buddha.⁴⁰

EARLY STAGES OF THE STORY

This curious transfer of the religious teacher of Asia to the Christian Martyrology has an equally curious history. Saint John of Damascus wrote in the 8th century in Greek, and an Arabic translation of his work, belonging to the 11th century, still survives. The story of Josaphat was popular in the Greek Church, and was embodied by Simeon the Metaphrast in the lives of the saints, *circ.* 1150 A.D. The Greek form of the name is *Ioasaph*.⁴¹ By the 12th century, the *Life of Barlaam and Josaphat* had already reached Western Europe in a Latin form. During the first half of the 13th century, Vincent de Beauvais inserted it in his *Speculum Historiale*; and in the latter half of that century it found a place in the Golden Legend of Jacques de Voragine. Meanwhile, it had also been popularized by the troubadour, Guy de Cambrai. From this double source, the Golden Legend of the Church and the French poem of the people, the story of Barlaam and Josaphat spread throughout

the Roman Catholic side, by Emmanuel Cosquin, see *Revue des Questions Historiques*, lvi. pp. 579—600; Paris, October 1880.

⁴⁰ The earlier form of Josaphat was *Ioasaph* in Greek and *Youasaf* or *Youdasaf* in Arabic, an evident derivation from the Sanskrit *Boddhisattwa*, through the Persian form *Boudasp* (Weber). The name of the magician Theudas is in like manner an accurate philological reproduction of Devadatta or Thevdat.

⁴¹ See the valuable note in Colonel Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. pp. 302—309 (2nd ed., 1875).

Europe. German, Provencal, Italian, Polish, Spanish, English, and Norse versions carried it from the southern extremity of the Continent to Sweden and Iceland.

In 1583, the legend was entered in the Roman Martyrology for the 27th day of November, as we have already seen, upon the alleged testimony of St. John of Damascus. A church in Palermo still (1874) bears the dedication, *Divo Iosaphat*.⁴² The Roman Martyrology of Gregory XIII., revised under the auspices of Urban VIII., has a universal acceptance throughout Catholic Christendom; although, from the statements of Pope Benedict XIV., and others, it would appear that it is to be used for edification, rather than as a work resting on infallible authority.⁴³ However this may be, the text of the two legends, and the names of their prominent actors, place beyond doubt the identity of the Eastern and the Western story.

A JAPANESE TEMPLE : ITS ANALOGIES TO HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY

It is difficult to enter a Japanese Buddhist temple without being struck by analogies to the Christian ritual on the one hand, and to Hinduism on the other. The chantings of the priests, their bowing as they pass the altar, their vestments, rosaries, bells, incense, and the responses of the worshippers, remind one of the Christian ritual. 'The temple at Rokugo,' writes a recent traveller to a remote town in Japan, 'was very beautiful, and, except that its ornaments were superior in solidity and good taste, differed little from a Romish church. The low altar, on which were lilies and lighted candles, was draped in blue and silver; and on the high altar, draped in crimson and cloth of gold, there was nothing but a closed shrine, an incense-burner, and a vase of lotuses.'⁴⁴ In a Buddhist temple at Ningpo, the Chinese Goddess of Mercy, Kwan-yin, whose resemblance to the Virgin Mary and Child has already been mentioned is seen standing on a serpent, bruising his head with her heel.

BUDDHA AS AN AVATAR OF VISHNU

The Hindus, while denouncing Buddha as a heretic, have been constrained to admit him to a place in their mythology.

⁴² Yule, *op. cit.* p. 308.

⁴³ This aspect of the question is discussed at considerable length by Emmanuel Cosquin, pp. 583—594. He gives the two legends of Buddha and of Barlaam-Josaphat in parallel columns, pp. 590—594 of the *Revue des Questions Historiques*, vol. lvi., already cited.

⁴⁴ Bird's *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*, vol. i. p. 295 (ed. 1880).

They regard him as the ninth, and hitherto last, incarnation of Vishnu,—.....until the tenth or final descent of Vishnu, on the white horse, with a flaming sword like a comet in his hand, for the destruction of the wicked and the renovation of the world.

BUDDHA'S PERSONALITY DENIED

While, on the one hand, a vast growth of legends has arisen around Buddha, tending to bring out every episode of his life into strong relief, efforts have been made, on the other hand, to explain away his personal identity. No date can be assigned with certainty for his existence on this earth. The Northern Buddhists have fourteen different accounts, ranging from 2422 to 546 B.C.⁴⁵ The Southern Buddhists agree in starting from the 1st of June 543 B.C. as the day of Buddha's death. This latter date, 543 B.C., is usually accepted by European writers ; but Indian chronology, as worked back from inscriptions and coins,⁴⁶ gives the date 478 B.C. Another line of research brings his death as far down as 412 B.C. Some scholars, indeed, have argued that Buddhism is merely a religious development of the Brahmanical Sankhya philosophy of Kapila ; that Buddha's birth is placed at a purely allegorical site, Kapilavastu, 'the abode of Kapila ;' that his mother is called Mayadevi, in reference to the Maya doctrine of Kapila's system ; and that his own two names are symbolical ones—Siddartha, 'he who has fulfilled his end,' and Buddha, 'the Enlightened.'

LINKS WITH BRAHMANISM : BUDDHISM MERELY THE SANKHYA SYSTEM (?)

Buddhism and Brahmanism are unquestionably united by intermediate links. Certain of the sacred texts of the Brahmans, particularly the Vrihad Aranyaka and the Atharva Upanishad of the Yoga system, teach doctrines which are essentially Buddhistic. According to Wilson and others, Buddha had

⁴⁵ *Csoma de Koros, on the authority of Tibetan mss., Tibetan Grammar, p. 199. A debt long overdue has at length been paid to one of the most single-minded of Oriental scholars by the publication of Theodore Duka's Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Koros. (Trubner, 1885.)*

⁴⁶ *General Cunningham works back the date of Buddha's death to 478 B.C., and takes this as his starting-point in the Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, p. vii. The subject is admirably discussed by Rhys Davids in the International Numismata Orientalia (Ceylon fasciculus), pp. 38—56. He arrives at 412 B.C. as the most probable date. Oldenberg fixes it at about 480 B.C.*

possibly no personal existence ;⁴⁷ Buddhism was merely the Sankhya philosophy widened into a national religion; and the religious life of the Buddhistic orders was the old Brahmanical type popularized.⁴⁸ The theory is at any rate so far true, that Buddhism was not a sudden invention of any single mind, but a development on a broader basis of a philosophy and religion which preceded it. Such speculations, however, leave out of sight the two great traditional features of Buddhism—namely, the preacher's appeal to the people, and the undying influence of his beautiful life. Senart's still more sceptical theory of Buddha as a Solar Myth, has completely broken down under the critical examination of Oldenberg.

BUDDHISM DID NOT OUST BRAHMANISM

Buddhism never ousted Brahmanism from any large part of India. The two systems coexisted as popular religions from the death of Buddha during thirteen hundred years (543 B.C. to about 800 A.D.), and modern Hinduism is the joint product of both. The legends of Buddha, especially those of the Northern Canon,⁴⁹ bear witness to the active influence of Brahmanism during the whole period of Buddha's life. After his death, certain kings and certain eras were intensely Buddhist; but the continuous existence of Brahmanism is abundantly proved from the time of Alexander (327 B.C.) downwards. The historians who chronicled Alexander's march, and the Greek ambassador Megasthenes, who succeeded them (300 B.C.) in their literary labours, bear witness to the predominance of Brahmanism in the period immediately preceding Asoka. Inscriptions, local legends, Sanskrit literature, and the drama, disclose the survival of Brahman influence during the next six centuries

⁴⁷ H. H. Wilson went so far as to say, 'It seems not impossible that Sakya Muni is an unreal being, and that all that is related of him is as much a fiction as is that of his preceding migrations and the miracles that attended his birth, his life, and his departure.' The arguments are dealt with by Weber, *Hist. Ind. Lit.* pp. 284—290, ed. 1878.

⁴⁸ Oldenberg's *Buddha, sein Leben*, contains valuable evidence on this subject (Hoey's transl. pp. 46, 48 to 59, etc.). See also *The Sankhya Aphorisms of Kapila, Sanskrit and English, with illustrative texts from the Commentaries by Ballantyne, formerly Principal of the Benares College*, 3rd ed. (Trubner, 1885.)

⁴⁹ See *The Life of the Buddha and the Early History of his Order, derived from the Tibetan texts*, by Woodville Rockhill of the U. S. Legation in China; also Oldenberg's *Buddha*.

(244 B.C. to 400 A.D.). From 400 A.D. we have the evidence of the Chinese Pilgrims, who toiled through Central Asia into India to visit the birthplace of their faith.⁵⁰

FA-HIAN, 399 A.D.

'Never did more devoted Pilgrims,' writes the greatest living student of their lives,⁵¹ 'leave their native country to encounter the perils of travel in foreign and distant lands; never did disciples more ardently desire to gaze on the sacred vestiges of their religion; never did men endure greater sufferings by desert, mountain, and sea, than these simple-minded, earnest Buddhist priests.' Fa-Hian entered India from Afghanistan, and journeyed down the whole Gangetic valley to the Bay of Bengal in 399—413 A.D. He found Brahman priests equally honoured with Buddhist monks, and temples to the Indian gods side by side with the religious houses of the Buddhist faith.

HIUEN TSIANG, 629 A.D.

Hien Tsiang, a still greater Pilgrim, also travelled to India from China by the Central Asia route, and has left a fuller record of the state of the two religions in the 7th century. His wanderings extended from 629 to 645 A.D. Everywhere throughout India he found the two systems eagerly competing for the suffrages of the people. By this time, indeed, Brahmanism was

⁵⁰ *The Si-yu-ki, or Buddhist Records of the Western World, translated from the Chinese, by Samuel Beal (Trubner, 2 vols., 1884), has completed and perfected the work begun by Julien and Remusat. Beal's volumes throw a flood of light on the social, religious, and political condition of India from the 5th to the 7th century A.D. The older authorities are Foe Koue Ki, ou Relation des Royaumes Bouddhiques; Voyages dans la Tartarie, l'Afghanistan et l'Inde a la fin du iv. siecle, par Chi-Fa-Hian, translated by A. Remusat, reviewed by Klaproth and Landresse, 1836. Beal's Travels of the Buddhist Pilgrim Fa-Hian, translated with Notes and Prolegomena, 1869; Julien's Voyages des Pelerins Bouddhistes, t. i.; Histoire de la Vie de Hiouen-Tsang et de ses Voyages dans l'Inde, translated from the Chinese, 1853, t. ii. and iii.; Memoires sur les Contrees Occidentales, par Hiouen-Tsang, translated from the Chinese, 1857—59. C. J. Neumann's Pilgerfahrten Buddhistischer Priester von China nach Indien, aus dem Chinesischen ubersetzt, 1883, of which I have yet seen only one volume; General Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, and his Reports of the Archæological Survey of India (various dates).*

⁵¹ *Si-yu-ki, Beal's Introduction, pp. ix. x.*

beginning to reassert itself at the expense of the Buddhist religion. The monuments of the great Buddhist monarchs, Asoka and Kanishka, confronted him from the moment he neared the Punjab frontier; but so also did the temples of Siva and his 'dread' queen Bhima. Throughout North-Western India he found Buddhist convents and monks surrounded by 'swarms of heretics,' i.e., Brahmanical sects.

The political power was also divided, though Buddhist sovereigns still predominated. A Buddhist monarch ruled over ten kingdoms in Afghanistan. At Peshawar, the great monastery built by Kanishka was deserted, but the populace remained faithful. In Kashmir, the king and people were devout Buddhists, under the teaching of 500 monasteries and 5000 monks. In the country identified with Jaipur, on the other hand, the inhabitants were devoted to heresy and war.

BUDDHISM IN INDIA, 629—645, A.D.

Buddhist influence in Northern India seems, during the 7th century A.D., to have centred in the fertile plain between the Jumna and the Ganges, and in Behar. At Kanauj (Kanyakubja), on the Ganges, Hiuen Tsiang found a powerful Buddhist monarch, Siladitya, whose influence reached from the Punjab to North-Eastern Bengal, and from the Himalayas to the Nārbada river. Here flourished 100 Buddhist convents and 10,000 monks. But the king's eldest brother had been lately slain by a sovereign of Eastern India, a hater of Buddhism; and 200 temples to the Brahman gods reared their heads under the protection of the devout Siladitya himself.

COUNCIL OF SILADITYA, 634 A.D.

Siladitya appears as an Asoka of the 7th century A.D., and he practised with primitive vigour the two great Buddhist virtues of spreading the faith and charity. The former he attempted by means of a General Council in 634 A.D. Twenty-one tributary sovereigns attended, together with the most learned Buddhist monks and Brahmans of their kingdoms. But the object of the convocation was no longer the undisputed assertion of the Buddhist religion. It dealt with the two phases of the religious life of India at that time. First, a discussion between the Buddhists and Brahman philosophers of the Sankhya and Vaiseshika schools; second, a dispute between the Buddhist sects who followed respectively the Northern and the Southern Canons, known as 'the Greater and the Lesser Vehicle of the Law.' The rites of the populace were of as composite a character as the doctrines of their teachers. On the first day of the

Council, a statue of Buddha was installed with great pomp; on the second, an image of the Sun-god; on the third, an idol of Siva.

SILADITYA'S CHARITY

Siladitya held a solemn distribution of his royal treasures every five years. Hiuen Tsiang describes how on the plain near Allahabad, where the Ganges and the Jumna unite their waters, the kings of the Empire, and a multitude of people, were feasted for seventy-five days. Siladitya brought forth the stores of his palace, and gave them away to Brahmans and Buddhists, to monks and heretics, without distinction. At the end of the festival, he stripped off his jewels and royal raiment, handed them to the bystanders, and, like Buddha of old, put on the rags of a beggar. By this ceremony the monarch commemorated the Great Renunciation of the founder of the Buddhist faith. At the same time he discharged the highest duty inculcated alike by the Buddhist and Brahmanical religions, namely almsgiving.

MONASTERY OF NALANDA

The vast monastery of Nalanda⁵² formed a seat of learning which recalls the universities of mediæval Europe. Ten thousand monks and novices of the eighteen Buddhist schools here studied theology, philosophy, law, science, especially medicine, and practised their devotions. They lived in lettered ease, supported from the royal funds. But even this stronghold of Buddhism furnishes a proof that Buddhism was only one of two hostile creeds in India. During the brief period with regard to which the Chinese records afford information, it was three times destroyed by the enemies of the faith.⁵³

MINGLING OF BUDDHISM AND BRAHMANISM, 629—645, A.D.

Hiuen Tsiang travelled from the Punjab to the mouth of the Ganges, and made journeys into Southern India. But everywhere he found the two religions mingled. Buddh-Gaya, which holds so high a sanctity in the legends of Buddha, had already become a great Brahman centre. On the east of Bengal, Assam had not been converted to Buddhism. In the south-west, Orissa

⁵² Identified with the modern Baragaon, near Gaya. The Great Monastery can be traced by a mass of brick ruins, 1600 feet long by 400 feet deep. General Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*, pp. 468—470, ed. 1871.

⁵³ Beal's *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*, p. 371, ed. 1871.

was a stronghold of the Buddhist faith. But in the seaport of Tamruk, at the mouth of the Hugli, the temples to the Brahman gods were five times more numerous than the monasteries of the faithful. On the Madras coast, Buddhism flourished; and indeed throughout Southern India the faith seems still to have been in the ascendant, although struggling against Brahman heretics and their gods.

VICTORY OF BRAHMANISM, 700—900, A.D.

During the 8th and 9th centuries A.D., Brahmanism became the ruling religion. There are legends of persecutions, instigated by Brahman reformers, such as Kumarila Bhatta and Sankara Acharya. Local evidence of these persecutions has lately been collected in many parts of India, and some native Indian scholars believe that the extirpation of Buddhism was effected by a general suppression instigated by the Brahmans and enforced by a central governing power. Of any such centrally organized and forcible suppression, sufficient proofs are not forthcoming. Force no doubt played a part but the downfall of Buddhism seems to have largely resulted from natural decay, and from new movements of religious thought, rather than from any general suppression by the sword. Its extinction is contemporaneous with the rise of Hinduism.

In the 11th century, it was chiefly outlying States, like Kashmir and Orissa, that remained faithful. When the Muham-madans came permanently upon the scene, Buddhism as a popular faith has almost disappeared from the interior Provinces of India. Magadha, the cradle of the religion, still continued Buddhist under the Pal Rajas down to the Musalman conquest of Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1199 A.D.⁵⁴

BUDDHISM AN EXILED RELIGION, 1000 A.D.

During nearly a thousand years Buddhism has been a banished religion from its native home. But it has won greater triumphs in its exile than it could have ever achieved in the land of its birth. It has created a literature and a religion for nearly half the human race, and has affected the beliefs of the other half. Five hundred millions of men, or perhaps forty per cent. of the inhabitants of the world, still acknowledge, with more or less fidelity, the holy teaching of Buddha. Afghanistan, Nepal, Eastern Turkistan, Tibet, Mongolia, Manchuria, China,

⁵⁴ MS. materials supplied to the author by General Cunningham, to whose *Archæological Reports* and kind assistance this volume is deeply indebted.

Japan, the Eastern Archipelago, Siam, Burma, Ceylon, and India, at one time marked the magnificent circumference of its conquests. Its shrines and monasteries stretched in a continuous line from what are now the confines of the Russian Empire to the equatorial islands of the Pacific. During twenty-four centuries Buddhism has encountered and outlived a series of powerful rivals. At this day it forms, with Christianity and Islam, one of the three great religions of the world; and the most numerously followed of the three.

BUDDHIST SURVIVALS IN INDIA

In India its influence has survived its separate existence. The Buddhist period not only left a distinct sect, the Jains, but it supplied the spiritual basis on which Brahmanism finally developed from the creed of a caste into the religion of the people.....

THE JAINS

The Jains number about half a million in British India. Like the Buddhists, they deny the authority of the Veda, except in so far as it agrees with their own doctrines. They disregard sacrifice; practise a strict morality; believe that their past and future states depend upon their own actions rather than on any external deity; and scrupulously reverence the vital principle in man and beast. They differ from the Buddhists chiefly in their ritual and objects of worship. The veneration of good men departed is common to both, but the Jains have expanded and methodized such adoration on lines of their own.

JAIN DOCTRINES

The Buddhists admit that many Buddhas have appeared in successive lives upon earth, and attained *Nirvana* or beatific extinction; but they confine their reverence to a comparatively small number. The Jains divide time into successive eras, and assign twenty-four *Jinas* or just men made perfect, to each.⁵⁵ They name twenty-four in the past age, twenty-four in the present, and twenty-four in the era to come; and place colossal statues of white or black marble to this great company of saints in their temples. They adore above all the two latest, or twenty-

⁵⁵ Under such titles as *Jagata-prabhu*, 'lord of the world;' *Kshinakarma*, 'freed from ceremonial acts;' *Sarvajna*, 'all knowing;' *Adhiswara*, 'supreme lord;' *Tirthankara*, 'he who has crossed over the world;' and *Jina*, 'he who has conquered the human passions.'

third and twenty-fourth *Jinas* of the present era—namely, Parsvanath⁵⁶ and Mahavira.

JAIN TEMPLE CITIES

The Jains choose wooded mountains and the most lovely retreats of nature for their places of pilgrimage, and cover them with exquisitely-carved shrines in white marble or stucco. Parasnath Hill in Bengal, the temple city of Palitana in Kathiawar, and Mount Abu which rises with its gems of architecture like a jewelled island from the Rajputana plains, form well-known scenes of their worship. The Jains are a wealthy community, usually engaged in banking or wholesale commerce, devoid indeed of the old missionary spirit of Buddhism, but closely knit together among themselves. Their charity is boundless; and they form the chief supporters of the beast hospitals, which the old Buddhistic tenderness for animals has left in many of the cities of India.

RELATION OF JAINISM TO BUDDHISM : JAINS EARLIER THAN BUDDHISTS (?)

Jainism is, in its external aspects, Buddhism equipped with a mythology—a mythology, however, not of gods, but of saints. But in its essentials, Jainism forms a survival of beliefs anterior to Asoka and Kanishka. According to the old view, the Jains are a remnant of the Indian Buddhists who saved themselves from extinction by compromises with Hinduism, and so managed to erect themselves into a recognised caste. According to the later and truer view, they represent in an unbroken succession the Nigantha sect of the Asoka edicts. The Jains themselves claim as their founder, Mahavira, the teacher or contemporary of Buddha; and the Niganthas appear as a sect independent of, indeed opposed to, the Buddhists in the Rock Inscriptions of Asoka and in the Southern Canon (*pitakas*).

Mahavira, who bore also the spiritual name of Vardhamana, 'The Increaser,' is the 24th Jina or 'Conqueror of the Passions,' adored in the present age of Jain chronology. Like Buddha, he was of princely birth, and lived and laboured in the same country and at the same time as Buddha. According to the southern Buddhistic dates, Buddha 'attained rest' 543 B.C., and Mahavira in 526 B.C. But according to the Jain texts, Mahavira was the predecessor and teacher of Buddha.

ANTIQUITY OF THE JAINS

A theory has accordingly been advanced that the Buddhism

⁵⁶ Popularly rendered Parasnath.

of Asoka (244 B.C.) was in reality a later product than the Nigantha or Jain doctrines.⁵⁷ The Jains are divided into the Svetambaras, 'The White Robed,' and the Digambaras, 'The Naked.' The Tibetan texts make it clear that sects closely analogous to the Jains existed in the time of Buddha, and that they were antecedent and rival orders to that which Buddha established.⁵⁸ Even the Southern Buddhist Canon preserves recollections of a struggle between a naked sect like the Jain Digambaras, and the decently robed Buddhists.⁵⁹ This Digambara or Nigantha sect (Nigrantha, 'those who have cast aside every tie') was very distinctly recognised by Asoka's edicts; and both the Svetambara and Digambara orders of the modern Jains find mention in the early copper-plate inscriptions of Mysore, *circ.* 5th or 6th century A.D. The Jains in our own day feel strongly on this subject, and the head of the Jain community at Ahmadabad, with whom I fully discussed the point, argued with great earnestness and learning to prove that their faith was anterior to Buddhism.

Until quite recently, however, European scholars did not admit the pretensions of the Jains to pre-Buddhistic antiquity. H. H. Wilson questioned their importance at any period earlier than twelve centuries ago.⁶⁰ Weber regarded 'the Jains as merely one of the oldest sects of Buddhism;' and Lassen believed that they had branched off from the Buddhists.⁶¹ M. Barth, after a careful discussion of the evidence, still thought that we must regard the Jains 'as a sect which took its rise in Buddhism.'⁶² On the other hand, Oldenberg, who brings the latest light from the Pali texts to bear on the question, accepts

⁵⁷ This subject was discussed in Edward Thomas' *Jainism, or the Early Faith of Asoka*; in Rhys Davids' article in "The Academy" of 13th September 1879; in his *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 27; and in the *Numismata Orientalia* (Ceylon fasciculus), pp. 55, 60.

⁵⁸ Woodville Rockhill's *Life of the Buddha*, from the *Bkrah-Hgyur* and *Bstan-Hgyur* in *variis locis*. 1884.

⁵⁹ See for example the curious story of the devout Buddhist bride from the Burmese sacred books, in Bishop Bigandet's *Life of Gaudama*, pp. 257-259, vol. i., ed. 1882.

⁶⁰ *Essays and Lectures on the Religion of the Hindus*, by H. H. Wilson, Dr. Reinhold Rost's edition, p. 329, vol. i. (1862).

⁶¹ Weber's *Indische Studien*, xvi. 210; and Lassen's *Indische Alterthumskunde*, iv. 763 *et seq.*

⁶² Barth's *Religions of India*, ed. 1882, p. 151; also Barth's *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, iii. 90.

the identity of the Jain sect with the Niganthas 'into whose midst the younger brotherhood of Buddha entered.'⁶³

JACOBI'S INVESTIGATION OF THE QUESTION :
JAINISM OLDER THAN BUDDHISM

The learned Jacobi has now investigated this question from the Jain texts themselves.⁶⁴ Oldenberg had proved, out of the Buddhist scriptures, that Buddhism was a true product of Brahman doctrine and discipline. Jacobi shows that both 'Buddhism and Jainism must be regarded as religions developed out of Brahmanism not by a sudden reformation, but prepared by a religious movement going on for a long time.'⁶⁵ And he brings forward evidence for believing that Jainism was the earlier outgrowth ; that it was probably founded by Parsvanath, now revered as the 23rd Jina ; and merely reformed by Mahavira, the contemporary of Buddha.⁶⁶ The outfit of the Jain monk, his alms-bowl, rope, and water vessel, was practically the equipment of the previous Brahman ascetic.⁶⁷ In doctrine, the Jains accepted the Brahman pantheistic philosophy of the *Atman*, or Universal Soul. They believed that not only animals and plants, but the elements themselves, earth, fire, water, and wind, were endowed with souls. Buddha made a further divergence. He combated the Brahman doctrine of the Universal Soul ; and the Jain dogma, of the elements and minerals being endowed with souls, finds no place in Buddhist philosophy.⁶⁸

DATE OF THE JAIN SCRIPTURES : JAINS AN
INDEPENDENT SECT

Jacobi believes that the Jain texts were composed or collected at the end of the 4th century B.C. ; that the origin of the extant Jain literature cannot be placed earlier than about 300 B.C. ; and that their sacred books were reduced to writing in the 5th century A.D.⁶⁹ He thinks that the two existing divisions of the Jains, the Svetambaras and the Digambaras,

⁶³ *Buddha, his Life, his Doctrine, his Order*, by Hermann Oldenberg. Hoey's translation (1882), p. 67. See also his pp. 66 and (foot-note) 77, and 175.

⁶⁴ *Jaina Sutras, Part I., the Acharanga Sutra, and the Kalpa Sutra*, by Hermann Jacobi, forming vol. xxii. of the *Sacred Books of the East*. Clarendon Press, 1884.

⁶⁵ *Jacobi, op. cit., Introduction, xxxii.*

⁶⁶ *Jacobi, op. cit. xxxiv.*

⁶⁷ *For slight differences, see Jacobi, xxviii.*

⁶⁸ *Jacobi, op. cit. xxxiii.*

⁶⁹ *Op. cit. xxxv. and xliii.*

separated from each other about two or three hundred years after the death of the founder; but 'that the development of the Jain church has not been at any time violently interrupted.' That, 'in fact, we can follow this development from its true beginning through its various stages, and that Jainism is as much independent from other sects, especially from Buddhism, as can be expected from any sect.'⁷⁰

MODERN JAINISM

In its external aspects, modern Jainism may be described as a religion allied in doctrine to ancient Indian Buddhism, but humanized by saint-worship, and narrowed from a national religion to the exclusive requirements of a sect.

SURVIVALS OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA

The noblest survivals of Buddhism in India are to be found, however, not among any peculiar body, but in the religion of the people; in that principle of the brotherhood of man, with the reassertion of which each new revival of Hinduism starts; in the asylum which the great Vaishnav sect affords to women who have fallen victims to caste rules, to the widow and the outcast; in that gentleness and charity to all men, which take the place of a poor-law in India, and give a high significance to the half-satirical epithet of the 'mild' Hindu.

....I have endeavoured to give a continuous view of Buddhism from the 6th century B.C., when it developed out of Brahmanism, down to the close of the 19th century A.D. The brevity imperiously imposed on such a sketch, renders it at many points less satisfactory than I could have wished. But, so far as I am aware, no similar presentment has yet been offered, and the reader can at once verify and amplify the details in each branch of the subject from the authorities cited in the foot notes.....

A revival of Buddhism is, I repeat, one of the present possibilities in India. The life and teaching of Buddha are also beginning to exercise a new influence on religious thought in Europe and America. As that teaching becomes more accurately known to the Western world, it will be divested of the mystical pretensions with which certain of its modern professors have obscured it. Buddhism will stand forth as the embodiment of the eternal verity that as a man sows he will reap; associated with the personal duties of mastery over self and kindness to all men; and quickened into a popular religion by the example of a noble and beautiful Life.

⁷⁰ *Op. cit.* xlvii.

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